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EDITORIAL

THE Nazi persecution of Christianity has in recent years engaged much more attention than the relation of the Church and the State in Italy; yet, for all who have an interest in the future of Europe and of Christendom, the latter may be of more consequence, and certainly has no less intrinsic importance. We welcome, therefore, the exhaustive and fully documented account of the Italian situation which has been published under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs.[1] The author, Dr D. A. Binchy, is Professor of Legal History and Jurisprudence in University College, Dublin; and he has achieved a degree of objectivity that contrasts refreshingly with the glut of tendentious and feverish books on contemporary affairs with which we continue to be indulged. The bulk of the book (it contains over 750 pages) is concerned with the Lateran Agreements of 1929 and their working during the succeeding ten years; this is preceded by a survey of "the Roman Question" from about 1850 and by vivid character sketches of Pius XI and Mussolini, and followed by an estimate of the outcome of the conflict up to the death of the former and of the outlook for the future. The subject-matter is so varied and the style so lively that the reader's interest never flags.

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It has not hitherto been easy to form a balanced opinion about the effects of the Lateran Agreements either on the independence of the Vatican or on the status of the Italian Church. There can be no excuse in future for the expression of uninformed opinions, for we have here every aspect of the evidence submitted for judgment. While there is still room for doubt as to whether in the aggregate advantage or disadvantage has accrued to the Church, Dr Binchy shows convincingly that the simple, one-sided verdicts that

[1] *Church and State in Fascist Italy.* (O.U.P. 31s. 6d.)

have gained currency do not bear examination. It is certainly not true that since 1929 the Vatican and the Italian Church have been "tied hand and foot" to the Fascist State; it is equally certain that the Vatican, to some extent, and the Italian Church, to a much greater extent, have been seriously compromised by what has occurred, and that the prospect for the future is grave and even dreadful. Apart from the Pope's lapse in his notorious speech at the end of the Abyssinian war—and it is clear now that this *was* a lapse from standards that otherwise he followed with courage as well as prudence—we do not see what substantially different course he ought to have pursued—that is, when all the realities of the situation are taken into account. If the papacy had not made terms with the Fascist State, the Church in Italy would have been swallowed up by the new régime. An agreed settlement was the most hopeful means of securing vantage-ground from which to resist total absorption. Of course, if it is held that the Pope ought to have turned the Holy See into an organ of Old Testament prophecy instead of maintaining it as the centre of government of a world-wide Church, the case will be different, but such a supposition hardly lies within the realities, or even possibilities, of the situation.

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While Pius XI comes out of the story with a dignity and greatness that can only be estimated when it is seen in its full range, the same cannot be said of many of the Italian bishops. But then ultra-patriotic and sanguine bishops are not peculiar to the Church of Italy, and we cannot be sure that *mutatis mutandis* the record of the Episcopate in this country would have been much different. It might even have been worse, for, whereas in Italy there had been both in practice and in theory a costly recognition of the distinct provinces of Church and State (so that the present confusion of the claims of God and Cæsar is less excusable), we need to ask whether in England the necessary distinctions are nowadays either firmly grasped in theory or clearly manifest in practice. Not, indeed, that the aptitude for compromise, upon which we flatter ourselves, is a matter for sheer reproach. Dr Binchy points out that the Italians have a similar aptitude, but the difference, upon which he remarks, is worthy of note.

The Italian genius for compromise is no less highly developed than the British, but it operates along entirely different lines; instead of sedulously avoiding all reference to principles, it boldly enunciates them and even insists on them, for to the Latin mind the importance of principles is in no way lessened by the *combinazioni* which practical necessities may impose (p. 219; *cp.* pp. 51, 350).

There is something for us to learn here. It is for the time being gratifying to pretend, when all we can do is to make the best of a difficult or bad job, that it is after all a very good job indeed; but it is not honest, and in the long run is likely to have fatal results.

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The real test, in Italy as elsewhere, still lies ahead. Upon the outcome of the war will depend the form it takes. Dr Binchy examines dispassionately what would be the alternative effects of an Axis victory or defeat. In either event the relations of Church and State in Italy seem bound to deteriorate. For in the former case the threatened absorption of the Church by the State would be much harder to resist; it is a threat " far more dangerous than the most brutal persecution, because more subtle, more insidious, more adapted to the laxity of the average man " (p. 744). On the other hand, if the Fascists are overthrown, the monarchy will go with them, and the new régime is almost certain to be fiercely anti-clerical. In this case, while Britain might intervene to secure the independence of the Holy See, little could be done from without to mitigate the ordeal of the Italian Church. It is a grim conclusion that " the outlook for the Church in Italy, whether under a Fascist or an anti-Fascist dispensation, is bleak and menacing " (p. 752).

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Finally, we note that, while Dr Binchy advances strong arguments to justify the predominance of Italians in the administration of the Vatican in the past—a matter which is easily misunderstood by unsympathetic observers—he considers that steps ought now to be taken towards its internationalization.

The Problem of Exegesis

THE purpose of this article is to draw attention to the existence of a problem, rather than to offer a solution of it, and the problem is that which faces anyone who seeks to understand and communicate to others the meaning of the Scriptures, and more particularly of the New Testament. This article will therefore seem rather inconclusive, but even so may still be of value, for two reasons: first, because the careful formulation of any problem is a necessary and important step towards its eventual solution; and, secondly, because this particular problem, in spite of its importance, has received very little attention from English theologians.

The problem, stated briefly, is that of finding a method of interpreting the N.T. which shall be at once scientific and appropriate to its special subject-matter. This will be a method not so much of talking about the N.T. (that is, of N.T. *criticism*), but of letting the N.T. speak (that is, of *interpretation*). This is a problem which has in recent years received considerable attention from German theologians, and particularly from those who have been most acutely aware of the religious crisis which developed after the last war. This has compelled them to abandon the detached, critical, and academic attitude towards the N.T. which was prevalent in their student days, and to examine afresh their methods and principles of exegesis. But the problem is not one which concerns German theologians alone, for the religious crisis in Germany, though it first became manifest after the last war, and has subsequently been aggravated by the National Socialist revolution, owes its origin to causes which began to operate before the last war; for it is really one of the results of that decay of Liberalism, both as a philosophy and as a political system, of which the emergence of National Socialism was not the cause, but only the most decisive symptom. But, though its results have been most spectacular in Germany, this decay of Liberalism is by no means confined to that country. It is a general phenomenon, of which some symptoms are discernible in England. Here also there is a religious crisis, and English theologians may well discover that, in the crisis produced by the decay of Liberalism, nineteenth-century methods of handling the N.T. are inadequate for expounding it intelligibly to men whose presuppositions and outlook on

life are not those of the nineteenth century. Now, the application of the methods of historical criticism to the N.T. was characteristic of nineteenth-century Liberalism in the field of theology, and it is this which the present religious crisis is proving to be inadequate to achieve the aim which the N.T. scholar sets before himself—namely, that of understanding and expounding the N.T. This does not mean that historical criticism is without value. Its value is real, but it is only the preliminary to the real exposition of Scripture, which is something easier to recognize than to define, but which may be said to have been achieved when one hears in the language of one's own time the message which one is convinced was meant by the author of one's text to be conveyed to those to whom he first addressed himself. This immediately leads back to the general problem, for it raises the question, *Is there any criterion by which this conviction can be proved to be trustworthy?* Or, in other words, and more generally, *Can exegesis be a science?* These questions have been raised by the present crisis in religion, for our situation to-day at the end of an epoch, facing an unknowable future, is more like the first century of our era than the nineteenth; our thought is compelled to be eschatological, and therefore we are better able to appreciate the N.T. than those whose thought was influenced by the optimistic Liberalism of the last century.

But it would be disastrous if this were to lead to a relapse into fundamentalism, and so historical criticism must be preserved as an integral part of the theological discipline of learning to understand the N.T. And to ensure this it is necessary that its limitations should be recognized. So a substantial part of this article will be devoted to an examination of historical criticism as applied to the N.T., with the aim of vindicating its place in theology, while at the same time noting its limitations. It must be supplemented by what may be called *theological* exegesis.

Furthermore, it is necessary for the preservation of the scientific character of N.T. study, insofar as that has already been achieved, that the study of *method* should be continuously pursued, and that current techniques should be submitted to systematic and thorough criticism. But there is at present very little systematic study of this kind, and there is a real danger lest N.T. study should degenerate into a mere business of the routine application of rules of thumb. There is need for critical study, not only of

particular methods, as, for instance, that of "Form-criticism", but of the method of historical criticism as a whole.

Finally, there is a consideration even more fundamental which makes it important for Christians to have as truly scientific and objective a method of exegesis as possible. It is that the N.T. is for Christians both the source (or at least a very important source) of doctrine and also in some sense its criterion, since any doctrine which was manifestly at variance with the teaching of the N.T would be condemned as untrue. From this it follows that if Christians could achieve agreement on the method of exegesis to be applied to the N.T. (and apply it consistently), they would be in sight of agreement in doctrine; whereas at the present time Christians of different persuasions argue about the teaching of the N.T. without reflecting upon the methods of exegesis by means of which they seek to interpret it. So if a truly scientific system of exegesis could be worked out, and applied, many a controversy would dissolve and many a division between Christians disappear, while the N.T. would really be capable of use as a criterion of the truth of Christian doctrine.

That this is something which it is easier to desire than to achieve is, however, evident from the most cursory examination of the history of doctrine. In all controversies the appeal to Scripture has been made by both sides, but generally quite inconclusively, because the question of the method of interpretation to be used was not raised, or, if raised, was not settled satisfactorily. It is, however, true that in many of the great controversies which have agitated the Church, as, for instance, in that of Irenæus with the Gnostics or of Luther with his opponents, the problem of exegesis has been raised, for theologians have always been impressed by the need for testing their dogmatic constructions by the touchstone of Holy Scripture, and have often found that doctrinal error has been due to inadequate or inaccurate exegesis. This is particularly clear in the case of Irenæus or of Luther. Liberal theologians of the last century thought that in the application of historical criticism to the N.T. they had found the finally adequate exegetical technique. But the pressure of events is now hurrying to its close the epoch of Liberalism, both in politics and in theology. Its essential shallowness is being made manifest, and it is becoming clear that, just as a society organized on

the principles of political Liberalism (as that was understood in the last century) would be unable to stand the strain of conflict with the totalitarian powers, so also Liberalism in theology will not provide adequate weapons for the spiritual conflict that faces the Church of Christ.

But before the examination of historical criticism can be begun, it is necessary to raise the larger question, *What do we mean when we say we understand anything?* since it is most probably as a part of the problem of understanding that the problem of N.T. exegesis will be solved. But the discussion of such a question, involving as it does the use of such words as *understanding* and *meaning*, is made very difficult by the fact that one has to use, *as if one already knew what they meant*, the very terms one is trying to define. This means that explanations always tend to turn into a *petitio principii*. One cannot discuss what *understanding* means with a person whom one does not expect to understand the discussion. This difficulty appears to be unavoidable, but it is worth while drawing attention to it, because it shows how easily we take for granted the fact that we do indeed understand one another. Unless we are sufficiently aware of this as the miracle which it in fact is, we shall not be sufficiently impressed by the need of an adequate method of achieving it. Now, we use the word *understand* in various connexions, but the one of immediate concern here is the understanding of the spoken or the written word. We understand what a person says to us when we are enabled to enter into conversation with him, to establish contact with his thoughts and purposes, to be influenced by them, and to influence them in turn. And the understanding of the written word is analogous to that of the spoken, except that the danger of misunderstanding is greater, since there is no possibility of the actual conversation which furnishes a criterion of the success of our understanding in the case of the spoken word. We can ask a man what he means, but not a book or a letter. And here we see the first difficulty which confronts the exegete, for if he wants to produce an interpretation of his text which really penetrates its meaning he must, by an act of the imagination akin to that of the dramatic poet, supply the want of an actual conversation by engaging upon an imaginary one—which is a task of great difficulty and delicacy.

What, then, are the pre-requisites of understanding? The possession of a common language is not in itself enough.

Language is neither objective enough nor (if the term be allowed) neutral enough to exclude all misunderstanding. For to a certain extent every individual uses a language of his own, though fortunately the languages of normal people coincide sufficiently to make understanding in matters of everyday experience fairly straightforward. The number of people who use words as Humpty-Dumpty does in *Through the Looking-glass* is fortunately not large, but there is enough individualism in the use of language to suggest that the need for self-expression has been almost as important a cause of its development as the need for communication. For an appreciable part of our speech retains the character of self-expression. Everyone has favourite words, or favourite and individual turns of phrase, so that very often the precise connotation of a word, and the precise emotional reaction its use provokes, may be different for the man who utters it and the man who hears it. And when one comes into fields removed from everyday experience—poetry, mythology, philosophy, or theology—one finds that writers, particularly those with vigorous and individual personalities, or who have something original to communicate, use highly individualized vocabularies and phraseologies. One thinks, for instance, of Karl Barth or of the late Sir Edwyn Hoskyns. And this is a fact for which allowance must constantly be made when one is trying to understand the N.T., for the first Christians converted not only men, but also words, to the service of Christ.

So a common language (which we do not even possess in the case of the N.T.) is not in itself sufficient; for perfect understanding one must also have in common a fundamentally similar way of thinking or looking at things, or what may conveniently be called a common ideology. It is the lack of this common ideology which makes it so difficult for an ordinary Englishman to argue with a Communist or a Nazi with any prospect of achieving more than frayed tempers. And the same is true of a great deal of theological discussion between members of different sects or schools of thought.

Now, if it is so difficult sometimes to come to terms with men who after all are one's contemporaries, how can it be an easy matter to come to terms with a collection of writings of very diverse character composed, all of them, 1,800 or more years ago? For centuries men read the N.T. in a way which the critic must consider naive, but which is entirely

natural. They read it (as ordinary Christian men read it now) with the tacit assumption that they could come to terms with it directly, in order to find out the truth about questions which arose in their own lives and demanded answers, and to use its utterances for the guidance of their own conduct. This is the natural way of reading any book which claims to offer such teaching, but it is naive, since it leads men to assume that the writer of the book they read shares their own ideology. This is the main reason why in the period before the application of historical criticism to the N.T. men generally tended to resort to allegory to remove any difficulties they found in the text they were studying. Being unaware of the difference in ideology between themselves and the writers of the N.T., and being, moreover, generally bound by a rigid theory of the inspiration and consequent inerrancy of Scripture, they were unable to account for these difficulties. And it has been the great service of historical criticism to biblical and particularly to N.T. study that it has revealed, not only the real reason for difficulties but also the untenability of the old naive method of reading the N.T., by showing that the ideology of the men who wrote it is quite different from our own. But so far the result of the application of historical criticism has generally only been to reveal the existence of this intellectual chasm between the men of the first and twentieth centuries, and practically nothing has been done to enable us to cross it and make the thoughts of the man of the first century our own—which we must do if the N.T. is to preserve its proper place and influence in Christianity. The discovery of some scientific method of bridging the chasm is the present problem of exegesis.

But instead of pressing on to grapple with this problem, those who occupy themselves with the application of historical criticism to the N.T. have mainly devoted themselves to the purely academic task of reconstructing N.T. theology as something belonging essentially to the past. But N.T. theology is no substitute for dogmatic theology, and these men have only succeeded in making the N.T. strange and enigmatic; they have prevented men from using it in the old naive way, but have not yet found a new way of *putting it across* (to use an expressive colloquialism). The result is that the N.T. is gradually ceasing to be read, and that men ask themselves why ever the theologians make such a fuss about an old book. It is true that the full

results of historical criticism did not at first manifest themselves. It was at first thought that by means of historical criticism it would be possible to disentangle the elements of permanent value in the teaching of the N.T. from those due to accommodation to contemporary ways of thought. Thus the eschatology of the Gospels was dismissed as accommodation, and the moral teaching of the Sermon on the Mount announced to be *the* Gospel. But it is impossible to draw any such distinction between elements of permanent and of temporary value in the Gospels. In very truth *The Word became flesh.* There is nothing in the N.T. which is not presented, not only in the language, but also in the ideology of the first century, for absolute truth is not revealed *as such.* So the ultimate task of the interpreter of the N.T. is to transpose the message of his text from the ideology of the first to that of the twentieth century, in such a way that its original force and effect are preserved. This is the problem of exegesis. The task is one of great delicacy, and is made more so by the fact that the teaching of the N.T., even in the N.T. itself, is very often *new wine in old bottles.*

For the completion of this task historical criticism is quite inadequate, though it is indispensable as a preliminary to it. Its inadequacy is due to the circumstances of its origin and affiliations. It is closely akin in method and outlook to the natural sciences, and so it represents the application of a fundamentally alien technique, appropriate to the study of inanimate matter or of the activities of non-rational beings, to an entirely different subject-matter. Historically its development coincides with the beginning of the epoch of the domination of natural science, which in the course of the nineteenth century came to be regarded by many as furnishing the only kind of knowledge attainable by man, and so dictated the methods to be followed by any intellectual activity which would claim to be scientific. Historical criticism therefore became purely phenomenological, and dealt with the N.T. simply as the product of natural causes, leaving out of account the possibility of its inspiration or of its containing any supernatural revelation. It could no more deal with such questions than a physiologist can decide whether man has a soul, but its tendency has been nevertheless to deny that it is in any way due to supernatural causes, just as it is for physiologists to deny the existence of a soul. Historical criticism did raise the question of the historicity of the events narrated in the N.T.,

but it did not deal with a question ultimately more important—with the question of the truth or relevance of its doctrine. Its main concern was to see the N.T. in the context of its contemporary religious environment, to explain its teaching by comparing it with that of contemporary religious documents, and to reconstruct its thought as a part of the history of religion, as a geologist might study the plant-life of the coal-measures, or an archæologist reconstruct the palaces of Knossos.

But all this provides no answer to the question of the relevance of the N.T., which is what really concerns Christians, and the attitude of detachment which this involves may lead to an ultimate misunderstanding. It is, of course, necessary to clear one's mind of partisan prejudices, but no one can really approach the study of the N.T. with absolute impartiality, and to pretend to an impartiality one does not possess is more misleading than to be partial—and to be aware of it. And if anyone did begin the study of the N.T. without prejudice or partiality, and remained in the same state of mind at the end of his study, he would have misunderstood it. The whole purpose of its writers is to bring men to a decision between accepting the Gospel or rejecting it, and if one continues in academic detachment unaware of this fact, then one has failed to understand the N.T. And for understanding the making of the choice between acceptance and rejection is more important than the direction in which it is made. Nietzsche, who came to a decision and hated the N.T., probably had a more penetrating understanding of it than the Liberal theologians, his contemporaries. But hatred is more apt to lead to an unbalanced judgment than are faith and love, for love implies congeniality, and congeniality furnishes a securer basis for understanding than antipathy. But love must not be mere enthusiasm; it must be kept self-conscious and reflective by the preparatory discipline of historical criticism.

For understanding, then, to be complete, some common ground is necessary, and it may well be that the common ground, which we men of the twentieth century have in our Christianity with the men who wrote the N.T., provides the best bridge across the abyss of which historical criticism has revealed the existence. It is not the historian of religion or the psychologist who will understand or explain what St Paul meant by *justification by faith*, but the man who has

in a measure shared St Paul's experience, as St Augustine or Martin Luther did. The difference between their understanding of St Paul and the historical critic's is analogous to the difference between the patient's and the physician's knowledge of a disease. The latter can give you a lot of information about it, but only the former can say what it feels like. Both kinds of knowledge are no doubt essential to the perfect exegete. One may well say with Origen that to understand the N.T. one must have *the mind of Christ* (1 Cor. ii, 16). But this is not a matter of science. Perhaps true exegesis must begin as a science, but must end by being something else—an illumination by God's Holy Spirit of the mind which has undergone the preliminary *ascesis* of historical criticism.

Thus historical criticism remains an integral and necessary part of the work of exegesis, though not sufficient to bring one to an adequate understanding of the N.T. Its great service has been to reveal the existence of the problem set by the difference between the ways of thought and expression natural to the writers of the N.T. and to us, but the problem remains. Can its solution be furthered by any improvement in the technique of exegesis? Can there be a *science* of specifically theological exegesis?

J. N. Sanders.

A Note on Frédéric Ozanam

Ne perdons pas patience, messieurs. Dieu est patient parce qu'il est éternel : et les chrétiens aussi. (*Mélanges*, i, 145.)

The emergence of the French Church from what might have seemed to be the irreparable disaster of the Revolution was marked by two events—the *Concordat* of 1801 with Napoleon and the appearance of Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme*. The one, in spite of the disgraceful way in which Napoleon obtained and imposed it, and in spite of his scandalous treatment of the Vicar of Christ, registered the reappearance of the Church as a factor in politics; while the other was the beginning of a new religious apologetic, the effects of which were to reach much further than its author could ever have expected.

The restoration of the Bourbons, with the accompaniment of the *Concordat* of 1817, was the beginning of a reaction, political and ecclesiastical, which led inevitably to the July

revolution of 1830. The alliance between throne and altar, which was of the essence of Gallicanism, was to be once more cemented, and the Church looked forward to the restoration of its ancient position of privilege and influence. The lectures of Victor Cousin and Guizot were suppressed, and for a time Chateaubriand was Foreign Secretary of France. The coronation of Charles X at Reims in 1825 appeared to symbolize the permanence of a political and religious order, now happily established.

But this order had its weaknesses and its bitter enemies. The régime fell politically because of its reckless disregard of realities. Royalists and clericals had hoped to set up a reactionary absolutism; these hopes were swept away once and for all when Charles X went into exile.

During these years the young Breton Lamennais appeared like a portent, preaching violently against Gallicanism and gathering around him at La Chênaie men like Gerbet, Rohrbacher, Lacordaire, Maurice de Guérin and Montalembert. This stormy and unhappy genius took for his emblem a broken oak-tree, with this device: *Je romps et ne plie pas.* The man who nourished his soul on the *Imitation* became the prophet of ultramontanism and of democracy, believing in the powers of the new age which seemed to be opened before him by the July revolution. His journal *L'Avenir* had for its motto: *Dieu et la liberté.* Montalembert said, in those days of expectant optimism: " If I had to write the *Génie du Christianisme* now, I should conceive it in a completely different manner. I should show that Christianity is the system of thought of the future and of human liberty."

Besides their defence of religious liberty, the writers to *L'Avenir*, and especially C. de Coux, courageously attacked the social question, against the complacency of the academic economists and of many sincere Catholics. The Catholic social tradition was brought before men's eyes again, and the responsibility of the Church was emphasized. Further, the Church must be set free from its association with the State, and political liberty must be granted to the peoples of Europe. Lamennais himself went so far in his republicanism and liberalism that his condemnation by the Pope became almost a political necessity. Lacordaire took another and a better road, and became the chief instrument of a true religious revival in France.

It is with this revival, in the years between 1830 and 1848,

that the name of Frédéric Ozanam is associated. He was born at Milan on April 23, 1813. His father had been by turns merchant at Lyons, then soldier, and finally a doctor. When Napoleon's armies left Italy, he returned to Lyons, where Frédéric grew up in an atmosphere favourable to religion, study, and works of charity. It was to the Abbé Noirot, whom Victor Cousin afterwards described as " the first professor of philosophy in France ", that, at a time of intellectual crisis, he owed his faith and his understanding of the meaning of catholicism. Noirot had taught him, he said, to put order and clarity into his thoughts. " I believed henceforth with a reasoned faith." To have begun from such a solid foundation was no mean advantage. Brilliancy of gifts and ardour of temperament were given to some of his contemporaries, but he would also meet his opponents on their own ground of learning patiently mastered, and he would show himself their equal. In an early letter (1831), he speaks of the breaking-up of the established order, and asks whether from the ruins of thrones overturned a new society " more brilliant, younger and more beautiful " will appear. Shall we see *novos cœlos et novam terram*? There *is* a Providence, he says, there *is* a God. All human creatures cannot be mere " extravagances "; there *are* truths which will save men and civilization, and the problem, the urgent problem, is that of finding them.

Full of these thoughts, he went to Paris at the end of 1831 to begin the serious study of law. For a time he lodged in the house of Ampère, the famous mathematician and scientist, who received him like a son and by his example strengthened him in all his resolutions. Once in S. Etienne du Mont he saw the great man kneeling, absorbed in prayer, before the Blessed Sacrament. " He was kneeling," says Ozanam, " before the same altar as Descartes and Pascal, beside the poor widow and the little children, themselves less humble than he."

But Paris seemed to him a " moral desert ", full of corruption. *Habitavi cum habitantibus Cedar, multum incola fuit anima mea!* At the Sorbonne—" this ancient Sorbonne, founded by Christianity, with its dome still crowned by the sign of the Cross "—he heard professors like Letronne and Jouffroy preaching rationalism and showing their contempt for Christianity and the Church. Ozanam, with some young friends of like mind, organized a successful opposition by means of public replies. The attacks ceased.

In 1833 Ozanam had formed a society of young men, not all of whom were Catholics, to discuss the problems that faced them in the new and troubled age which was opening before them. In those days the seed was sown out of which was to grow the famous Société de Saint-Vincent de Paul. Some of them felt with Ozanam the need of a purely Christian gathering. They began and closed their meetings with prayer, they determined on visiting the poor in their homes, and distributed their gifts in kind to the most needy. They wished to strengthen their faith by active charity, and to take away the reproach that Christianity could no longer be recognized by its fruits. They began with eight members, but soon grew in numbers until at the end of 1834 it was necessary to divide the Paris society into two conferences. By 1837 the society had branches at Nimes, Lyons, Nantes, Rennes and Rome, and in Paris its membership had risen to 220.

The triumph of Ozanam and his young friends might well have seemed complete when they at length persuaded the Archbishop of Paris to offer the pulpit of Notre-Dame to Lacordaire during the Lent of 1835. The nave of the great church was filled with men who had come to hear this pale and eloquent preacher set forth to the age of progress the Christian faith. "We seemed to be present, not at the resurrection of Catholicism, for Catholicism does not die, but at the religious resurrection of society itself."

In their request to the archbishop, these young men had pointed out the powerlessness of the intellectual systems, no sooner created than abandoned by the very reason which had created them, to satisfy the needs of youth. Only the certainties of the Catholic faith, which did not change, could co-ordinate and vivify their studies by relating them to a superior order of ideas, and also set before them the laws of that life in society for which they were preparing themselves. A philosophy of life was needed, including all proper human activities, a Christian philosophy, explaining to man his origin and end, and directing his way through life. Ozanam suffered much in those days from everything around him in the distracting, chaotic world of Paris. He wrote to his mother: "I am of an age to fast, and to-morrow I fast with the Church; am I not of an age also to suffer a little, and to fight as she does?"

In those early days he said: "We are too young to mix in the social conflict. Are we then to remain inert in the

midst of a suffering world? No. We have a preparatory work to do. Before acting for the common good, we can try to do good to a few; before regenerating France, we can help some among her poor. I should like to see all young men of intelligence and feeling joining together for some work of charity, and a great society formed throughout the country for the help of the working classes."

And again, he wrote beautifully and prophetically: "The faith, the charity of the first centuries! It is not too much for our age. Are we not flung, like the Christians of those days, into the midst of a corrupt civilization and a crumbling society? Look on the world which surrounds us. Are the rich and the fortunate much better than those who answered St Paul: *We will hear thee again of this matter*? And the poor and the common people, are they much more enlightened and do they possess more well-being than those to whom the apostles preached? The earth has grown cold: the blood of the martyrs will make it warm again."

Speaking of the defection of Lamennais and of the disturbing changes in Lamartine, he said: "We Catholics are punished for having put more trust in the genius of our great men than in the power of our God. We are punished because we have shown unbelievers, to justify ourselves in their eyes, our philosophers and our poets instead of showing them the eternal Cross. . . . It is wings, these two wings, which bear up the angels: faith and charity. We must fill up these empty places. In the place of the genius which fails us, grace must lead us; we must be brave, persevering, loving unto death, fighting to the end. Do not count on an easy victory: God has made it difficult, so that He may make our crowns more glorious."

It was uphill work among the poor of Paris: "These enervated souls, who after a year show you the same reserve, are careful never to contradict you, but will not change their own behaviour. . . . We are only apprentices in the art of charity. Let us hope that one day we shall become skilled and industrious workmen."

He saw clearly that the basis of all action, intellectual and social, must be not merely religious, in the broad sense, but orthodox. "Be sure that orthodoxy is the nerve, the strength of religion, and that without this vital condition every Catholic association is powerless. It is sweet to dream, but when we dream we sleep, and when we sleep we do not

act. To act, we must see with an imperturbable eye, with an assured conviction, the sacred goal at which we are aiming."

So early had Ozanam worked out the task of Christianity and in particular of Christian laymen at this time when the foundations of Western society seemed to be breaking up. His instinct was not wrong in this prevision of the inevitable result of man's attempt to live without God. He saw in the Church the divine society which alone could be a model for the society of men, and alone could bring forth from her treasures those teachings which could not merely save that society from self-destruction, but set it out again on a path of real progress, not destined to end in a monotonous frustration.

> The question which divides the men of our days is no longer one of political forms, it is a social question, it is to know whether the spirit of egoism or of sacrifice will prevail; if society is to be a great exploitation for the profit of the strongest, or a consecration of each for the good of all and especially for the protection of the weak.

Ozanam was now practising as an advocate in Lyons. His father's death placed upon him the responsibility of providing for the family. At the same time he was preparing for his doctorate at Paris a thesis on the philosophy of Dante. And the care of the Society of St Vincent de Paul brought with it constant difficulties, disappointments and anxieties. "For two years," he wrote, "I have been serving a hard apprenticeship to a virtue which was not familiar to me: the giving up of myself to God's will." "There is," he said, writing to his brother a few years afterwards, "a petition in the Lord's Prayer which we do not meditate on enough: 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'—that is to say, not as in hell, where it is accomplished by force and constraint, not as among men, where often it is done in ignorance or murmuring, but as among the angels, where it is obeyed with understanding and with love."

In January, 1839, he had to sustain his thesis on Dante at the Sorbonne before an illustrious panel of judges. "Ah! Monsieur Ozanam," exclaimed Cousin to the modest but triumphant candidate, "on n'est pas plus éloquent que cela!" At the same time Ozanam became Professor of Commercial Law at Lyons, but in 1841, the year of his

marriage, he was at Paris once more. Henceforth his work was to centre round the Chair of Literature at the Sorbonne.

His aim was to show that Christianity was always and would always be the civilizing force in history; that without it men were barbarians, just as the Germans had been before they had their Christian teachers, whose influence they were, as he pointed out, even now denying in favour of " the dream of an autochthonous civilization, from which Christianity (so they said) had made them fall away ". Catholicism ought in this modern age to make itself felt and respected, in politics, in learning, and in the arts. " We must show that every truth interests us, that we desire progress in all legitimate activities, and that in the midst of conflicts our spirits are calm enough for us to think of the peaceful occupations of students."

Ozanam set before himself the task of vindicating Christianity in history, not in the romantic, literary, and superficial manner of his brilliant predecessors, but with the patient mastery of sources and the employment of the new historical technique. Lord Acton once warned Simpson that Lacordaire was grossly ignorant of history, and Renan said as much of Lamennais. This reproach could not be levelled at Ozanam, who for all the eloquence of his spoken and his written word was steeped in the minute details of Western history.

But besides the vindication of Christianity and of Christian culture in the eyes of the learned, Ozanam saw that the message of the Church must go out to the people. *Passons aux barbares*—perhaps there was hope in them, weighed down as they were by their necessities and the burdens which they had to bear. " Read the beginning of the *City of God*, Salvian, Gildas, and you will see that from the fifth century many saints had more liking for the Goths, the Vandals, the Arian and idolatrous Franks than for the effeminate Catholics of the Roman towns. It is now a question of whole peoples, including country folk as well as townsmen. And if we can hope nothing from these barbarians, we have reached the end of all things, and so of our disputes." These barbarians, like those of old, were to be the possessors of political power and it was the Church's business, as formerly, to educate and civilize them in the Christian way. The revolution of 1848 brought all these problems to the surface. " If a larger number of Christians

and of the clergy in particular," he wrote to his brother, " had concerned themselves with the working men these ten years past, we should be more certain of the future, and all our hopes rest on the little which has been accomplished so far." The Church must win over the ordinary poor, the poor " who do not beg, but live by their work ", who " perhaps have never known the Church, or the priest or the sweet name of Christ ". He planned lectures and an evening school for them. The scope of the society was widened; economic problems must be studied, questions of organization of labour, leisure, wages. This was at the time when his archbishop was killed on the barricades. But he dared not be dismayed. " Were the whole of modern society to perish, it would cost God less to raise up after it a new society than to limit to the small results of these eighteen centuries the work of His Son's blood."

Like us to-day, Ozanam looked to the Middle Ages for guidance. " It is there," he said, " that I seem to have found the little light which remains to me in the obscurity of present circumstances." In the confusion of the times he saw that it was possible for all his hopes to appear to be disappointed, all his world in ruins. The destiny of the Church, he reflected, was less to dominate than to struggle and to suffer, just as our Lord Himself had foretold. " Our Lord stayed only a moment on Mount Tabor, and we have no image of His transfiguration: but He was a whole day upon the Cross, and it is His crucified humanity which is on all our altars."

I have quoted enough to show how Ozanam had clearly set out for himself and those of his contemporaries who were ready to listen what he conceived to be the task of the Church in the modern world.

His hopes were set, like ours, on the " resurrection of Christendom ", but, like us, he knew that the issue is in God's hands, who " when we think that we have wasted our efforts, our time and our pains, often brings out of it all a blessing much greater than we could have ever imagined ". We Christians are placed in a like position, with similar hopes and similar fears. It is in the hope that we might learn something from his example and perhaps gain some courage by the spectacle of his fortitude that I have attempted this slight sketch of his prophetic career.

The work of the Society of St Vincent de Paul—" our humble and illustrious patron "—grew after his death and

spread throughout the world. In his last visit to Italy in 1853, when his health was fatally undermined and he was vainly trying to re-establish it, Ozanam was comforted by a visit to the conferences established in Florence and other cities in Tuscany. At Antignano, a dying man, he received communion from a priest who rose from his own deathbed to say Mass for the stranger. Ozanam died at Marseilles, on September 8, 1853, in his fortieth year. Seventy years later the movement for his beatification began.

F. J. E. Raby.

Manifestos

This is a period in the life of the Church marked by the issue of statements and manifestos. Our special concern in this paper will be with those dealing with social matters, a sphere in which we have had the pronouncements of C.O.P.E.C., Stockholm, Lambeth 1930, Oxford 1937 and now Malvern, to name but the chief. Nor is this kind of activity confined to the English-speaking peoples and their religious leaders, for Pius XI is already beginning to be called " the Pope of the Encyclicals ".

It is always healthy to examine a current fashion critically, so that the best use can be made of it. There is always a danger that a good thing may be overworked. The friendly purpose of this paper is to ask that the utility of this particular method of pronouncements, as a means of recovering the Church's social tradition, should be put in question. Discussion may start from a double question, which is really one :

(*a*) By what right and with what authority does the Church speak to the world on social matters ?

(*b*) What chance has the Church of being heard ?

We may take it for granted that the Christian religion has a vital concern in social matters, and for two reasons. Since God is the creator of all things and Lord of all human activities, religion is necessarily concerned with the theology of so large a part of human life. And, secondly, since moral issues penetrate all the economic and political life of man, religion is deeply involved in it. In fact, medieval writers treated politics as a branch of moral theology.

There is, then, no question as to the competence and duty of the Church to deal with such matters. The problem

arises from the fact that a very large part of modern Europe is pagan in spirit, if not in name, and is not prepared to accept the jurisdiction of the Church over its action. The Church can rightly claim authority in religious and moral matters over all its members, but what is it to say or do to the world in general?

The position is not so simple as that of a small Christian community trying to live its distinctively Christian life in a pagan or secular world, as in the first four centuries. We are living in a Europe that at one time ordered its practical life upon the basis of a Christian civilization, and held a doctrine of the two swords, the ecclesiastical and civil powers jointly ruling the life of the community and of all the individuals within it (save the Jews, quarantined in their ghettoes). But the several countries of Western Europe have in varying degrees departed from that conception. For the most part on the continent governments have become officially secular—revolutionary France, Nazi Germany, socialist Spain, and so on. The Roman Church operates with these by means of concordats. In fact, we might describe the period since 1801 on the continent as the age of concordat religion.

In England, with an established Church, the medieval conception of the Christian state still remains, though with certain modifications. Some will reckon this an anachronism, others a starting-point for a new order of things, both in personal religion and in social practice.

The Scandinavian countries follow the English example rather than the south European. So do the Orthodox countries in the Balkans. Two powers have recently re-established religion, Portugal and Ireland.

Our main concern is with the English people, but we cannot overlook the fact that no one modern country, even insular England, can live isolated from the main currents of European thought. Continental ideas affect England, English action influences the countries of Europe, and will do so with greater force than ever if we are victorious in the war, and totalitarianism is discredited.

To complicate the English situation is the existence of the Nonconformist bodies, with their very decided social tradition. That tradition is now approximating much more closely to that of the Church. In this complicated situation what effect are the manifestos of the Church and of the various interdenominational councils going to

produce upon the English public, church-going and otherwise? The English, being a pragmatic people, are more likely to show the effect in practice rather than in doctrine and idea.

In the present effort to recover a Christian social tradition we may look to the Middle Ages for inspiration, but not for method. The medieval economy differed from the modern in being almost entirely a matter concerning individuals. It is true that there was a certain amount of corporate control of individuals by their local craft guilds, but nearly all transactions were the responsibility and work of single persons. Land-ownership, manufacture and commerce alike involved merely the dealing of single persons with single persons. Nowadays by far the greatest part of the determination of prices, wages, rates of discount and interest is done by groups or corporations. Whereas the medieval discipline was able to work by its authority over individual souls, under modern conditions such a discipline would have to deal with highly organized groups. If all the members of the group acknowledged Christian authority, it might be possible to create a new type of social discipline for the Church to act under modern economic conditions. But in the philosophy of Liberalism which distinguished modern Europe down to the advent of mystical Totalitarianism, corporations, like the State, must be neutral to religion, even though all their members were Christian. The Federation of British Industries would certainly regard it as a very strange thing if either Barthian or Catholic assumptions as to the nature of man claimed to have a say in the matter of tariffs, though a medieval merchant guild would have put the theological view of the end of man amongst the premisses upon which it had to argue. And can the Bank of England really escape the ultimates of moral theology, determining the bank rate upon what it believes to be purely technical grounds?

The second point in which modern conditions differ from the medieval is that in the latter all individuals, save the Jews, were nominally Christian and subject to the discipline of the Church in economic as in other matters.

We have, then, to envisage a modern situation in which economic matters are determined by groups, in which both Christians and non-Christians are combined for joint action, the whole group being based on secular assumptions. The survival of the medieval tradition of the union of

Church and State, which we have in England, affects mainly the political institutions of the country, as witness the remark of Mme Lebrun in Westminster Abbey: "La politique c'est la religion en Angleterre." Our economic institutions, being much later in origin, bear much less mark of the influence of religion—if any at all. The Church, then, can claim no direct authority (*imperium*) over the corporate action of economic groups, though theoretically it possesses but does not exercise discipline over the individual dealings of its members. But with the diffused Christianity existing in this country the Church does possess a great deal of influence (*auctoritas*) over public life, if she but cares to use it. With a public feeling that respects the name of Christ great influence attaches itself to any pronouncement that a given course of action may be called Christian and another not, or to a judgment that a Christian principle is at stake in a particular question or line of action.

But is there any other ground on which the Christian social doctrine, now being steadily beaten out, will carry weight?

It is a commonplace of theology that grace restores nature. It might, therefore, be presumed on *a priori* grounds (*a*) that the principles which Christianity urges would commend themselves to the natural conscience, (*b*) that its doctrine of man would be found to be more harmonious with the best instincts of men than pagan or secular concepts of his being, and (*c*) that specific Christian action would prove in the long run to be of more practical good to the community than the kinds of action or inaction inspired by other philosophies of life.

This, indeed, proves to be the case. We may illustrate this three-pronged contention by reference to three points in the Malvern Conference findings.

(*a*) No. 26*a*: "Human status ought not to depend upon the changing demands of the economic process; no one should be deprived of the support necessary for the good life by the fact that there is at some time no demand for his labour." This is in accordance with the principles of natural justice and should appeal to the innate conscience of every man. But it has taken Christian insight to see this and to maintain it against the false and one-sided doctrine of the nineteenth-century Poor Law that a man should receive from industry or society only what he "earns".

(*b*) No. 26*c*: "Regard must be paid to the family as, by

God's appointment, the basic social unit on whose stability and welfare all other social welfare in large measure depends." The fundamental necessity of the family and its unity have been denied in theory and in practice by various sociologies—in theory by Plato and the early Bolshevism, in practice by the industrial atomism of the nineteenth century and the Victorian Poor Law. To-day, so long as wages are calculated on an individual and not a family basis, economic individualism does violence to that creation of nature, the family. The emotional links binding the family are at one and the same time a fact of nature and the greatest force making for social solidarity. This should be obvious to anyone with eyes to see the long helplessness of the human young and to note the intense psychological reactions in family life; but it has been left to Christianity to see it, and to teach it to society by setting up Nazareth to confront the mine-compounds of South Africa.

(*c*) No. 26*g*: " We regard as of primary importance the securing to all children and adolescents the educational opportunities best suited to develop their faculties and to enable them to take their full share as Christian citizens in the life of the community—spiritual, cultural, economic." Education is a specific form of Christian action; how does it answer to the test that " it should prove to be more for the well-being and good of the community as a whole than the kinds of action inspired by other philosophies of life "? For a long time in Europe Christian education was the only education. So much did it prove its usefulness to society in general that the secular powers now insist on education for all. But has the secularly-based education justified itself? Whilst its technical achievements and economic utility are enormous, its personal achievement in the matter of preparing its subjects for life—and for death—is much open to doubt. It fails to provide an answer to the basic problems: why and how a man should live and to what end. It does not provide any standards by which life can be criticized, save only that of utility. Sometimes even it has provided a false end, as recently in Germany. Further, a sound policy would insist on the one hand that education is the right of all, according to a country's resources, in order to develop to the full the potentialities given by God to each, however humble; and on the other, that education is to enable a man to serve best in the community. Rights and duties go hand in hand in this matter of education, as in all

matters of Christian citizenship. If either side of this correlation is neglected, the result is disaster; as is evidenced in the idolatry of the Nazi leviathan State immolating its children, or in that of the careerist democracy educating go-getters. In the long run the Christian idea of education, as outlined in the Malvern Report, is the eminently practical one.

Here, then, is the answer to the double question we asked at the beginning of this article: With what authority and with what hope of success does the Church speak to the world in these matters of social principle and practical policy? As the Christian morality proves to be the recall of man to be his true natural self, any man, whether he be one acknowledging Christian sanctions or not, can appreciate the natural truth, validity and practicality of Christian social doctrine. As a corollary to the saying of Bishop Butler that "Christianity is a republication of natural religion" (*Analogy*, II, i, 5), we might add that "the Sermon on the Mount is a republication of natural morals".

That is the ground and strength of the Church's pronouncement to the world on social matters.

R. H. Tribe, S.S.M.

A Hope for School Divinity

In the introduction to the revised Cambridgeshire syllabus we read: "The documents must be studied seriously, intelligently, critically. But this is not all. We teachers have to be a devoted company of people." Most would agree about these two requisites: critical knowledge and religious enthusiasm. But many do not realize how easily in the classroom the second is swamped by the first — how religion becomes merely divinity. They may be ready to laugh at the old-fashioned régime of Bible manual with archæological notes. But they may have only replenished the old stock of Victorian whips with more highly critical scorpions. Is divinity just another subject—quite a bright and well-taught little subject (one period a week), but still another subject? In a curriculum already over-burdened with subjects this curious little mongrel (part history, part geography, part literature) has to be given its place. Yet,

carrying little examination value, it does not help to unlock any career and so often appears as a needless irritant. The second requisite, religious enthusiasm, may just survive but with shortage of time it is apt to dry down into moralization and the academic lesson plus moral is an odious mixture. Yet, in spite of this difficulty, church conferences and *The Times* correspondence columns resound with the bare demand for increased religious instruction. They cry that we are rapidly becoming a heathen nation. We must therefore catch them young, increase the dose and soon we shall all rediscover the Bible and be its people once again.

Now, I believe that the only way forward is a religious enthusiasm for the rights of the individual, claimed by both Christian and modern educationist, to be absolute and sacred: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." And the title-page of the Spens Report carries this saying of the eighteenth-century Roland d'Ecreville: "Chacun doit être à portée de recevoir l'éducation qui lui est propre." In other words, everyone is a free son of God and everyone has the right to be educated as such.

This can be called the great subjective truth of modern education; the right of the individual child to follow his own road and the duty of the teacher to see that he is not swerved into crooked and matted bypaths. The complementary objective truth asserts that all roads lead to Rome, Athens, Jerusalem and the world as a whole—the world, in fact, which is whole and continuous, not an academic jumble of separate compartments. Recognition of this will lead away from mere knowledge and cleverness into that spirit of wisdom which is a "breath of the power of God and a clear effluence of the glory of the Almighty".

Both truths can be summed up as the right of the individual to reach the wholeness of the world in his own way because he will certainly never reach it in any other way. Old academic tradition falsely isolated part of the objective truth, the importance of the subject. Extreme modern reaction isolates the subjective truth, the importance of the child. Both truths should be held together in healthy tension. I shall now consider them in the context of school divinity.

Subjective.—The right of a child to travel along his own road is infringed and frustrated by home, school and society. Schools should be able to tackle the maladjustments caused by home and society, but they tend to cause more mental difficulties than they solve. In school a child has to study set subjects whether or not he has capacity or interest for them. His method of study is passive, sitting at a desk and under detailed orders; and what activity exists outside the class is largely herd activity which tends to make the tough tougher and the sensitive more sensitive.

The divinity teacher in his weekly lesson cannot right all this wrong, but he can fully use his freedom from marks and examinations. He can go all out for the principle of individual activity, and if he does so I believe he will discover that the best method is the dialectical method of discussion and debate. He will discover a huge unsatisfied hunger for talk. "Please, sir, can we have a debate?" This everlasting question is no mere escape from work, as those who sneer against self-expression would assert. It is a demand for work, the altogether natural and active work of the free mind.

Here are three distinct advantages:—

(*a*) Talking brings out hidden dislikes, fears and doubts of religion. Churches are so dark. Services are so boring. There is something sad in the New Testament (debated against the Old) "all about the Cross and that". Sunday schools make you do silly things—colouring in pictures of Jesus, reading fables about trees paying homage at the crib.

From fourteen upwards, talking brings out the extent of agnosticism and atheism, the scientific and subjective biases of our age. How do we know the Bible is true? If it is true, why should it rule our lives? What do you mean by God?

(*b*) The method favours the individual in that each is encouraged to claim a fair hearing. But it is also strongly communal. Boys turn away from their individual desks and prospects. God uses them to help each other, "lending their minds out". This moral value of class work is grossly neglected by that large number who put all their faith in out-of-school activities. Such people are apt to say: "You cannot get to know a boy, you cannot judge his character in school." Yet they are content to surrender the five best hours of daylight to this impersonal

and amoral pastime. If character does not emerge from classwork, so much the worse for classwork.

> God guard me from those thoughts men think
> In the mind alone;
> He that sings a lasting song
> Sings in a marrow bone.

Such dust-clogged intellectualism was pabulum for the Nazi germ.

(*c*) The teacher is kept away from his " talk and chalk ". He has to listen and he is given the opportunity of learning the real level and range of religious experience upon which he can work. When he speaks from the floor of the house, with a boy as chairman, his authority will be doubled, because it becomes personal instead of hierarchic.

Objective.—" The earth is the Lord's and all that therein is." So may be expressed the full objective truth in modern education. Christians ought to be more jealous for this fullness, and more resentful against subject minds. They should oppose those academic departments which exclude all possibility of a world view. The isolated subject is hated by all good modern educationists. They know how the mind should grow from that stimulating exercise of jumping barriers, the spotting of similarity and contrast. But many Christians are content to erect their own barrier, another subject, the Bible. *Omnia exeunt in mysterium.* They would agree with this in theory, but in practice how can it be understood, unless subjects are allowed to go outwards, outside their own cramped and stuffy little orbits? " Viewed from this standpoint divinity, far from standing in isolation—as in some schools it seems to stand—provides the point at which many studies meet."[1] Instead of being just another subject, it should become the standing chairman, the *primus inter pares* of subjects, by its very nature always ardent for the work of integration.

Now at present I believe that the chief obstacle against this proper function of divinity is the exclusive restriction of time to study of the Bible. But opinion is growing in favour of extra-biblical approaches in order to regain interest for the Bible itself. The central difficulty about school Bible study is the remoteness in time, place and (Moffatt as you will) language.

[1] Board of Education, *The Organization and Curriculum of Sixth Forms in Secondary Schools*, p. 25.

> For what can it matter at all,
> And what can it matter to me,
> That Cæsar conquered Gaul
> In 58 B.C. ?

And what can it matter to a child that Abraham left Ur and Paul arrived at Rome, and the innumerable events between ? For the child lives in the present. He is therefore interested in the present and only interested in the past if it appears as the eternal present. And to trim up the past with Sunday-school illustrations from modern life is merely to heap incongruity on existing unreality. The fact is that exclusive Bible study leaves out massive and important parts of the objective truth which divinity should include. This omitted truth can be summed up under two main headings: (*a*) personal experience, (*b*) history.

Personal Experience.—Religious teaching should build on the full scope of experience in the modern world. This can be divided into science, art and ethics, and most of my space will be kept for the last.

Science.—Science should be a normal element in the divinity lesson, not the awkward rival to be handled with care in sixth-form discussions. The earth, in fact, is the Lord's. A sense of cosmic awe arises from astronomy.

> The heavens declare the glory of God,
> And the firmament sheweth his handiwork.
> One day telleth another,
> And one night certifieth another.

Science should stimulate the mood to appreciate this cosmic poetry of the Old Testament. Consideration of the physical leads naturally to the metaphysical. Divinity should claim for its own purpose that schoolboy zest to debate all scientific and philosophical questions under the sun.

Art.—The consummate art of the Bible by all means, but also the religious poetry of later ages. For art should be the milk of educational diet; it contains all the food values. The cognitive and the affective find here their perfect blend. Yet, although religion displays reality in terms of art rather than science, we allow logical argument and scientific history almost to monopolize the divinity lesson. The great resources of religious art remain untapped. Piero della Francesca, Bach, Browning—such paladins of the faith are kept unemployed or at ineffectively casual labour. I

have read to several forms Chesterton's lively lyric "The House of Christmas". There was an immediate and lively response. "It doesn't seem sissy, like a lot of ones on that subject." Nor can I imagine Francesca's "Nativity" or the Mass in B minor being called "sissy". Bad art may have emasculated religion, but good art will always strengthen it.

Ethics.—Modern education fears didacticism, and rightly. The strong but lop-sided morality of the Victorians is still discredited. Their ghostly successors have been sitting too long on the grave with wobbly crowns. Sermons on playing the game have lost the Arnold touch. Yet it is never too early to start the proper study of mankind, and the new instrument of psychology is waiting to be used. It is true that many psychologists are intolerant of religion, substituting for sin and repentance their new categories of mental disease and mental health. But our compromising genius has already produced a genuine body of Christian psychologists, and in their work the teacher will find an element of scientific fact which should bring a new savour and reality to the old moral lesson. A good example of this can be found in Yellowleas' *Psychology's Defence of the Faith*, where he explains the phenomenon of David listening to Nathan's parable of the poor man's ewe lamb and not realizing that it was directed against himself. It makes a striking introduction to the difficulties of self-knowledge. The teaching of Christian charity may similarly be reinforced by some microscope work on abreactive temper, the familiar practice of kicking the cat or cursing the office boy instead of oneself. Then, how far should we be tolerant of other people's faults? At any rate we should first study any possible reasons for those faults, even as we study symptoms of a physical disease. It may be that *tout comprendre c'est pardonner.* And Jesus said with equal emphasis, "Judge not."

The teaching of Christian courage may be helped by a detached study of fear. "Fears may be liars" and they so very often are. Adler illustrates his "fictive goal" by the story of three chickens A, B and C. B is always running away from A, and likewise C from B. Then C happens to meet A, who immediately in her turn takes fright. Few boys are entirely free from false fears, if only the fear of appearing foolish in front of a class. The competitive mark system easily causes a crippling sense of inferiority. Further aspects of fear may be considered, the growing "menace of

the years" which falls prey to astrologers, advertisers and other wholesale merchants of wishful thought. The negative approach should lead naturally to the positive, the purge to the illumination and unity. What sort of person is most free from fear? The person with the strongest interest in real life (persons and gardens rather than cats and cinemas). And a perfect love of life will go a long way towards casting out fear.

From about the age of fifteen questions of social ethics become relevant. They are by now familiar questions for this age: the relation of Christianity to the State and its instruments of armament and penal code; the relation of Christianity to economics, to education. And because they are familiar, because the idea of Christendom, at least, has been rescued from the embers, it is the more blameworthy that school divinity hardly claims this new and vital sphere for its own.

History.—The Bible should be *point de départ* for the whole line of religious history. It will then appear as the most important stage, not only because it is the one beginning, but also because it will be displayed as the living book down the ages. "No power on earth can prevent St Paul speaking directly to kindred spirits through the generations, however embarrassing the response of Marcion or Augustine, or Luther, or John Wesley, or Karl Barth may seem to us to be."[1] It is therefore no sound knowledge of the Bible which ends at the first century with St Paul's arrival in Rome. Anyone who has followed the work of Mr D. C. Somervell will notice that here I tread in his footsteps. He has been the pioneer for Church history in schools, and his *Short History of our Religion from Moses to the Present Day* is still unrivalled in its fine range and proportions.

If religious teaching does not include Church history, then a false impression is allowed to remain from the ordinary history course. The history of the Church is given an arbitrary prominence at its medieval and reformation stages. The quarrelsome aspects are thus made conspicuous, the struggles between popes and emperors, archbishops and kings, Protestants and Catholics. The three great missionary periods are correspondingly left obscure. I refer to the conversion of the Roman Empire, *c.* 33-400, the conversion of the rest of Europe and the new inhabitants

[1] H. G. Wood, *Christianity and the Nature of History*, p. 26.

of the Empire, *c.* 500-1000, and the modern missions to Asia, Africa, South America and the Pacific Islands, *c.* 1800 to the present day. In all these periods the Church has been a leading force in society. In the sixth century Benedict of Nursia and Pope Gregory were dominant figures of their general environment, and they both enabled the Benedictines' long-lasting work for civilization, the making of books and the draining of marshes. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries essentially the same claims can be made for men like Barbrooke Grubb in the South American Chaco, or societies like the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, and the Melanesian Mission. But school history is drearily preoccupied with the Constitutions of Clarendon and the Vestiarian controversy.

Christianity is an historical religion. The interest of the present age is centred on history, and the field is clearing for a supreme encounter of interpretation between Christian and Marxian philosophies. The communist exultantly feels that history is on his side, that his day will soon come in the proletarian fullness of time. The Christian should match this pride with a new consciousness of the Christian calendar, a new knowledge of its two thousand years, not out. But school history fails to achieve its first century.

Conclusion.—This article has appealed for a widening of religious teaching, for the extra-biblical approaches of history and personal experience. Some might criticize me for disparaging the unique revelation of the Bible. I would respect this opposition, but in return proffer the commonplace that quality is more important than quantity. Too often in the past the natural, vital and therefore leisurely approaches have been sacrificed for the hot pursuit of a crowded syllabus. Moreover, I maintain that without Church history the unique revelation of the Bible cannot be understood.

Others might call me too vague and diffuse. I would remind them that my object has been to expound a general idea. I am very much concerned with the practical applications and I hope later to be able to supply a detailed scheme. There has also not been space to consider the relation of religious teaching to the general time-table, the specifically religious life and the general social life of the school. I am conscious of many difficulties, but I am sure that my general idea is not Utopian. My hope for school divinity is that it may act as an immediate

and practical advance guard in the forward movements of education. I finally repeat my faith of equating the modern educational renaissance with the cause of Christianity. Great is the truth, and it will prevail. The true Christian teacher and the true teacher who does not call himself a Christian are moving in the same direction.

E. W. Edmonds.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

In consequence of the continued increase in the cost of production, the Publishers with much regret have been compelled to raise the price of Theology from 1s. to 1s. 6d., beginning with the January number. The prepaid post-free rate will be 15s. per annum. The change takes effect with the January number; in the case of prepaid subscriptions, when the subscription expires.

"Theology remains the great and abiding intellectual interest of mankind and, after the curious interlude of the age of secular progress, the twentieth century looks like witnessing its return. The price men pay for bad theology is too high for them to acquiesce in it for long."—*Tablet* (*March* 1, 1941).

MISCELLANEA

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NOTES

Christmas greetings to all our readers! *Comme une reine d'abeilles, le Christ vient regrouper autour de lui l'humanité.*

We again take the liberty of suggesting that a year's subscription to Theology (15s.) may make an acceptable Christmas present.

REVISED REVIEWS—X

The Infallibility of the Church. By George Salmon.

Some years ago on commons at Trinity College, Dublin, I was sitting opposite a young Anglican theologian who has since made several valuable contributions to Theology. I asked him if he had read Salmon's *Infallibility of the Church*; he had never heard of the book, or of the author, and said that he thought discussion of papal infallibility was nowadays irrelevant. This review is undertaken in order to see whether we really are justified to-day in passing over the book as irrelevant.

The Infallibility of the Church was first published in 1888, and since then has had two editions, both of them reprinted, the last in 1923 (from which all references in this review are taken); it was based on a course of lectures given to students of divinity in Trinity College, Dublin, by George Salmon, D.D., then Regius Professor of Divinity in the College and later its Provost.

As I believe the book is now little known outside the Church of Ireland, it is necessary to begin by giving a very brief summary of its contents. The first ten chapters are employed in discussing the Church's rule of faith. In these Salmon attacks Newman's theory of development, chiefly on the ground that, unless it is supplemented by the authority of an infallible Pope, it justifies Protestant developments quite as well as Roman Catholic, and asserts the necessity of using private judgment even in accepting the authority of an infallible Church. He refuses to allow the axiom that our Lord intended to constitute His Church an infallible guide to truth, showing that the analogy in the physical and moral spheres supports him. He argues that the Church's office in teaching does not involve infallibility, and discusses tradition, both in doctrine and in biblical interpretation, laying great stress on the rule that a trustworthy tradition must appear stronger as it is traced farther back. The next four chapters set forth a very convincing argument that the Church of Rome has never sincerely believed in her infallibility, has never used it to decide a living controversy or to avoid blunders on the part of the Papacy, and has in fact employed it exclusively as a sort of *vaticinatio post eventum*. The difficulties of the "Gallican" theory of infallibility and of attributing infallibility to General Councils are expounded in the next three chapters. The last six chapters return to the Papacy, and expose the insecurity of its connexion with St Peter; the growth of the Roman supremacy is shown to be the result of historical and political causes, and not in the least to resemble the gradual realization by the Western world of a revealed dogma; finally, Salmon asserts the virtual impossibility of describing such Popes as Liberius, Zosimus, Vigilius and Honorius as infallible guides, and demonstrates the failure of the theory of papal infallibility when the Pope's claim to temporal power brought it to an experimental test.

Out of these twenty-three chapters Salmon's own view of the Church's rule of faith and the Church's relation to doctrine and Scripture can be gained; much of this is as relevant to-day as ever. First of all, Newman's doctrine of development is untenable: "If the theory of the development of Christian doctrine be true . . . a Romanist cannot consistently censure a Protestant if he thinks Luther and Calvin teachers likely to be twelve centuries wiser than Chrysostom and Augustine. But if in the theory of development the fathers lose all claim to respect, it is still worse with Scripture: the fathers may have been but children, but the Apostles were but infants" (p. 276). Vincentius' *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus* is little more useful, since this rule can give us no help in controversies; each side claims agreement with the canon for its views (p. 270). Augustine's *securus iudicat orbis terrarum*, too, must be used with caution: if numbers are a trustworthy test of truth, why do we

believe that Athanasius was justified in standing against the world for the creed of Nicæa ? Pusey's view (which may perhaps also be called the modern Anglican view) that " if the whole Church agree in any statement of doctrine, that must be infallibly certain ", is just as unsatisfactory, since it is so long since the united Church agreed on any statement that " this theory is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the proof of the existence of an infallible guide " (p. 278). Indeed, the Church of England has never authoritatively pronounced even the first four General Councils to be infallible in their determinations, any more than the early Church did (p. 295).

So far all is negative, but there is evidence of a more positive attitude. For instance, Salmon admits that " the Church also is used by the Holy Spirit, both as a witness and guardian of Christian truth and an instructor in Christian morality " (p. 103); universities impart secular knowledge in much the same method as the Church is divinely appointed to impart religious knowledge (p. 111); " Christ foresaw our need of human instruction, and provided for it . . . by the institution of His Church, whose special duty it is to preserve His truth and proclaim it to the world " (p. 114); Salmon sums up his view of the teaching office of the Church in these words (p. 116): " In sum, then, I maintain that it is the office of the Church to teach; but that it is her duty to do so, not by making assertion merely, but by offering proofs; and, again, that while it is the duty of the individual Christian to receive with deference the teaching of the Church, it is his duty also, not listlessly to acquiesce in her statements, but to satisfy himself of the validity of her proofs." As for tradition, " it has uses, and important uses, both positive and negative " (p. 155): new-fangled interpretations of Scripture encounter in tradition a great presumption against them; it is useful " in matters of ritual or other positive institution " (*e.g.*, on the sufficiency of sprinkling in baptism), and hermeneutical tradition has some relevance in determining abstract doctrine. For defining the Church's sources of proof, Salmon falls back on Dr Hawkins' summary (p. 125), " The Church to teach, the Scriptures to prove ".

Yet this positive attitude strikes us to-day as giving only a very meagre view of the Church's function in regard to revealed truth; we may grant that she is not guided by tradition infallibly declared and interpreted by the Pope, or by the decrees of infallible councils, that infallibility attaches to her in no capacity; but can we go no farther than to say that the Church should be " listened to with attention, though not with blind acquiescence " and that she fulfils that function in religious truth which a town clock does in chronological accuracy (p. 115) ? The growth of the ecumenical movement, and that relativism and refusal to accept any authority in religious or metaphysical truth which is now so prevalent, demand that Anglican theologians shall

have something fuller and more positive to say, both about the authority of the Church in teaching her faith and about the development of Christian doctrine. Granting this, however, and granting that Salmon had an exaggerated confidence in the competence of the individual Christian to pass judgment on the Church's dogmas, it is hard to see how we can refuse to agree with his criticism of those theories of the office of the Church and the development of the faith which in his book he found reason to reject.

If we turn to the controversial point of view, it would be absurd to call the book irrelevant. Controversy of any sort, of course, may be called irrelevant, but Salmon was not ashamed of controversy. " I believe that the Church of Rome teaches false doctrine on many points which must be called important, if anything in religion can be called important " (p. 6). Moreover, the question of the Pope's infallibility is a crucial one: " Can we believe in our Lord's divinity—believe that He founded a Church, and not care to inquire whether or not it is true that He appointed a vicegerent upon earth to govern that Church, from whom His people are bound submissively to learn the truths of His religion, and apart from whom there can be no salvation ?" (p. 8). A great deal depends upon this infallibility: " There are some of these doctrines in respect of which nothing but a very strong belief that the Roman Church cannot decide wrongly will prevent a candid inquirer from coming to the conclusion that she has decided wrongly " (p. 18). The position of the Anglican communion, too, in a manner depends upon its rejection of papal claims, for " if the Church of England or of Ireland be not, in this sense of the word, Protestant, her position cannot be defended at all " (p. 10).

The modern defence of papal infallibility usually sets itself to define very closely the conditions under which the Pope speaks infallibly, but Salmon is quite prepared for this attitude: The first clear decision in accordance with the Vatican Council's conditions for an infallible utterance was not made till Pope Boniface VIII's *Unam Sanctam* in 1303, quite as much a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Roman theory of infallibility as was Pusey's theory. Again: " It is obviously a most unfair limitation to papal infallibility to maintain that the appointed guide to Christians collectively is unable to conduct them safely if they consult him individually. Really believe that the Pope is an infallible guide, and nothing but the controversial exigency of relieving yourself from assent to certain erroneous Papal decisions could induce you to put such a limitation on the office entrusted to him by Christ " (p. 438). The result, in short, of the modern attitude to papal infallibility is that " while Roman Catholics are now mainly agreed on the principle that the Pope is infallible, the greatest differences of opinion will be found among them as to whether any particular papal utterance is infallible " (p. 444).

Either the conditions imposed on papal infallibility reduce that infallibility to an absurdity, or a more generous definition of the Pope's infallibility has to explain away some demonstrably false papal decision taken under the defined conditions.

The Vatican Council (*Constitutio Dogmatica Prima de Ecclesia Christi*, caput IV) decreed: "So we, following the tradition faithfully observed from the beginning of the Christian faith . . . teach and declare that it is a divinely revealed dogma: that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra* . . . through divine help promised to him in the Blessed Peter is armed with that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer wished His Church to be instructed in defining doctrine about faith or morals." Before we can dismiss *The Infallibility of the Church* as irrelevant, we must satisfy ourselves that Dr Salmon failed in demonstrating that the divine Redeemer never promised infallibility to Peter or to the Church, that many Roman Pontiffs have been uninstructed in infallibility when they defined doctrine about faith or morals under any conditions, and that no tradition concerning papal infallibility has been observed from the beginning of the Christian faith. I do not think that any honest critic will find this task an easy one.

R. P. C. Hanson.

THE STUDIES OF A PRIEST

Many readers will be grateful for Professor Ramsey's judicious ventilation of the problem of theological colleges and the training of clergy (in Theology, October, 1941). Since the question has been brought forward again it may be opportune to suggest a related problem for consideration—namely, the continuation of a priest's studies after his ordination. Many young men, whose average course of training has consisted of taking an honours degree at a university, followed by two years at a theological college, while having good reason to be profoundly thankful for the benefits they have received, have at the same time learned sufficient to be deeply conscious of some of the deficiencies of their training. Commonly they leave their theological college with pious exhortations and resolutions to continue their studies, but seldom have they any clear knowledge of the direction they must follow. Very soon they become immersed in the multitude of practical activities in parish work, and their resolutions recede farther and farther into the background and their reading becomes more and more desultory and lacking in purpose.

Generalizations on a subject of such scope and complexity are dangerous, but certain categories may be usefully distinguished: (*a*) the priest who has read an honours course in theology for his degree; and (*b*) the man who does not possess such a back-

ground, but is introduced to the study of theology for the first time in his college, irrespective of whether he has taken a degree in some other school or not. The problems which confront these two classes will vary considerably.

Professor Ramsey aptly describes the vital and necessary process of the integration of theological knowledge which the first class of student may achieve during his period of residence at a theological college (*op. cit.*, p. 207). Once knowledge has been gained, even if in a somewhat departmentalized manner, and in the apparent abstraction of the " unity of faith " from the concrete realities of life, the problem of integration is a possible and logical step forward. The material is there upon which reflection and co-ordination must work, and into which new material can be incorporated. But I am more concerned to direct attention to the predicament of the second class of student, which probably forms the majority at the present time. He will find truly that " too much has been undertaken by too few teachers in too short a time " while he was in college. If the groundwork of knowledge has not been acquired, the introduction provided by a theological college commonly results in the confusion and indigestion of a limited and superficial knowledge which the young priest will find woefully inadequate for his teaching ministry.

At his ordination the priest pledges himself with diligence " always so to minister the doctrine and Sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, . . . to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines, contrary to God's word ", and further to devote himself to the " reading of the holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same ". Reflection upon the gravity of this vow should convince the priest that the necessity to continue his studies is no mere desire for a more learned and intellectual clergy, but simply that knowledge of Scripture and dogma should be the vital food of his devotion, and secondly the resources upon which he may draw for his teaching and for the diagnosis and cure of the spiritual disease which he will inevitably encounter.

To the priest who wishes to continue his studies, therefore, three possible courses are open: (*a*) he may determine to read for a post-graduate degree in theology; (*b*) he may wish to enter upon the study and research of some particular subject to which his interests and predilections may direct him; or finally (*c*) lacking either of these incentives, he may desire to make use of clergy or summer schools. But in each case he will find himself confronted with a number of obstacles which alone he will have difficulty in surmounting. These may be outlined briefly as follows:

(*a*) In the first place, after a period of parish work during which time for coherent study is not easy to obtain, a man very

soon loses the examination " temperament " and shrinks from the prospect of such an ordeal. But even if there is sufficient strength of purpose to overcome this reluctance, the guidance of someone conversant with university teaching will be required. For example, the candidate for the qualifying examination for the degree of Bachelor of Divinity in the University of Oxford will be examined in five subjects; but no direction is given in the regulations concerning the field he is expected to cover in any of these subjects or the main emphases of the examination. Such necessary direction can only be supplied by one who is directly implicated in the work, and in addition will require to be supplemented by detailed advice as to the particular sources to which his studies must be directed. The value of such guidance depends to a large extent on the personal contact established between director and student, and this cannot be achieved by the student whose only refuge in present circumstances is the correspondence course of deliberate cramming. In this connexion, two practical suggestions may be made which would perhaps provide a partial solution to the problem. Professor Ramsey rightly pleads for " the greater use of cathedral appointments for theologians ", and therefore we should look for at least one member of every Chapter whose special function would be the guidance of students in their choice of studies and sources and who would be fully conversant with the requirements of university teaching for that purpose. Secondly, it would be a great advantage if some competent body would compile bibliographies for the express guidance of students for various university examinations.

(*b*) There is a great deal of criticism directed against the examination system. It is suited to certain temperaments, while for others it is a nightmare, and it frequently appears that the brilliant examination mind proves the least constructive. For the priest who is deterred by the prospect of another examination there is the possibility of specialization and research work, either with or without a view to publication, or the composition of a thesis to be presented for further academic qualifications. To many this is the most attractive prospect, but again certain obstacles will be encountered. In the first place, guidance and direction is required from a competent scholar. It is likely that as the priest emerges from his theological college with an incomplete acquaintance with the groundwork and scope of theological knowledge he will be unaware of the field to which he may most profitably direct his studies, that which is least explored and in need of attention, and at the same time his own personal interests will be largely unformed and inarticulate. In this case the task of guidance and direction will be a much more delicate matter. It must be concerned, first, to clarify the student's own particular interests and problems, giving attention to the sphere in which his temperament and aptitude most fit him to specialize.

But, secondly, this must be largely governed by direction to the branches of theological study which most require attention, and this involves an accurate knowledge of the emphases of modern theology in the director. Thirdly, his research and written work will require a certain amount of supervision during its progress.

(*c*) Finally, there is the necessity of encouraging the studies of those priests who have no incentive to degree work or research. The attendance at one or other of the summer schools, which, if the priest takes the trouble to do a certain amount of preparation under the guidance of the syllabus, and to continue his work afterwards, should provide a valuable stimulus to further effort. But these institutions are purely voluntary, and there remain two other possible ways in which this class of student may be helped. I would suggest that the annual diocesan clergy school devoted to the study of some particular subject, with specific preliminary preparation, and which junior clergy were put under canonical obedience to attend, might well become a more regular and widespread feature. Secondly, the intellectual activity of ruridecanal Chapters requires considerable overhaul and renewal. If these bodies conscientiously set themselves to coherent corporate study in which each member determined to give of his best we might well look for a minor revival of learning among parochial clergy. As it is, the present writer vividly remembers his shame at one of his first attendances at such a gathering when the choice of a book for study during the winter session was being discussed and it was stipulated that the book selected should not cost more than half-a-crown ! That is symptomatic of the standard which many of these bodies set themselves. It does, however, lead to one final problem which will be met with by all students—that is, the access to books and other sources of study. The financial difficulties of clergy are a common cry, and it is true that the majority of them can ill afford the books they need, especially if they have an examination or research in view. Therefore, it is high time that serious attention was directed to the revision and re-stocking of the average diocesan theological library, and that steps were taken to make them more widely known, accessible and used by the parochial clergy.

The above analysis of the situation makes no claim to completeness. It is merely an outline of the problem as it appears to one who has suffered much perplexity from it. Each one of the points raised might well require further discussion in the light of the experience of others, and if it may serve to elicit such attention to and discussion of the problem it will have achieved its purpose.

R. H. Daubney.

RELIGION AND MRS EWING

It is difficult to realize that this is the centenary year of Juliana Horatia Ewing, born in 1841 in the Yorkshire vicarage of Ecclesfield, and from her happy childhood a most faithful daughter of the Church of England. Even from her first slender earnings she duly deducted a tenth for a picture for the sanctuary at Ecclesfield.

It may be truly said that the best flowers of her delicate art were Christmas roses—for once upon a merrier time she gave us for the now incredible price of a shilling a sequence of Christmas numbers of rare quality. To re-read any of her stories is to be surprised at their freshness and to ask what it is that keeps them evergreen. Strangely enough the brief notices of her centenary have failed to find the obvious answer to that question. Is it the clear-cut charm of her style? Is it the flower-love blossoming on page after page? Is it the almost Barrian touch of faëry? Is it the depth of her comprehension of the mystery of childhood, or even her delightful all-pervading humour? No! It is something more that will cause much of her prolific work to live, for it is throughout fragrant with a religion of virile ideals brightened with Franciscan joy that could triumph over the pain and weakness too often her portion.

One glance at the children's books preceding hers reveals a religion all gloom and frightfulness. The once popular *Fairchild Family* is interpolated with stilted prayers based on the theory that, in the words of a contemporary hymn, children are "small worms crawling in a vale of woe". The lachrymose heroine of that best-seller, *The Wide Wide World*, is given to morbid reflections which it is to be hoped were skipped by the readers of her biography. A favourite guide for infancy had a terrifying woodcut of babies burning in hell fire. Dickens was scarcely caricaturing when Paul Dombey heard Mrs Pipchin inform Miss Pankey that little girls who sniffed never went to heaven. Could the writers of this school believe that their cruel gospel of terror could teach the love of God? Did they quite forget the tenderness of One who bade little children come to Him?

Mrs Ewing's characters preached little and practised much. It will almost startle her admirers to be reminded that hers are in the best sense moral tales. Never sentimental, her pathos was reticent, her sunny humour unforced, yet there was always a wholesome lesson between the lines. She dealt in mothers whose creed was at once sound and cheerful. Arthur in *Mary's Meadow*, with the reiterated leit motif of the unselfishness of planting rare flowers here and there that all may enjoy them, explains it for us. "She does so despise us for greediness or grudging, or snatching or taking the best and leaving the rest, or being dogs in the manger or anything selfish, and *we cannot bear her to despise us*." Take that merry history of *The Brownies*

—what is it but a cunningly disguised sermon on the happiness of being useful? Or take that fairy tale, worthy of Hans Andersen, *Amelia and the Dwarfs*. Here again is a homily on kindness to animals, obedience, even such a homely virtue as tidiness. Or again let the wings of the pigeons in *Daddy Darwin's Dovecote* flutter about us to find the reward of faithfulness winningly shown. Mrs Ewing painted more than one faithful servant perfected in Mrs Bundle in *A Flat Iron for a Farthing*. Mrs Bundle takes her place in that select band of real nurses such as that of Juliet and the Mrs Berry who watched *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*. She was what Hardy called a " simple homespun woman ", yet she could train a very young squire in the way he should go to be a blessing to his tenants. She taught him to give, not to fling a half-crown too often to the undeserving but to learn his actual duty to his neighbour. In *Mrs Overtheway's Remembrances* church-going is shown as a pleasure, not merely a chill duty. That hay-scented walk rewarded the little damsels away on their first visit alone for keeping their promise to their mother. They had to overcome shyness and fear of ridicule—worst bugbears of childhood—but they enjoyed the afternoon service. Mrs Ewing never says poor lonely Ida longed to go to early Matins with the picturesque old lady, yet we are sure she did.

Two legends, *The Trinity Flower* and *Ladders to Heaven*, again stress the loveliness of unselfishness. In the first the devout old gardener-monk supplies a verse missing in the Benedicite: " Blessed be God for every herb of the field, and thrice blessed for those that smell." In the second, with its title from the pretty old name for lilies of the valley, " ladders to heaven ", the young brother given the bulbs as a rarity was tempted to " glorify " his own garden alone. Then came the vision splendid of a wood all lilies. He surrendered them and as he planted them there he said, " The blessing of my Maker rest on thee and give thee joy of thy loveliness and pleasure of thy perfume when I am gone." And when long after " satanic mills " invaded the wood and banished the lilies, the sweet tradition lingered and a lad who heard of it again set them in a secret place to multiply and rejoice the heart.

Mrs Ewing, too, well knew the restrictions of an invalid for a " cabined ample spirit ", and used the knowledge that might have led to bitterness with wonderful effect. For, like Tiny Tim in whose name thousands of hampers have rejoiced little cripples, *The Story of a Short Life* has left a tangible memorial at Chailey to help other " brave poor things ". Leonard's example was not merely to teach resignation, it was to show that he could live up to the family motto, " Happy is my lot ". Here Mrs Ewing again underlines her conviction that to be good with gay courage *is* to be happy. Hers were no deathbeds after the prevailing fashion of Dean Farrar's *Eric, or Little by Little*. It

was to the martial music of Bishop Heber's hymn, " The Son of God goes forth to war ", that " V.C." drew down the blind telling that one " who best could drink the cup of woe triumphant over pain " had joined the " valiant hearts who to their glory came ". Sir Evelyn Wood wrote to Mrs Ewing that he had shed tears over *The Story of a Short Life*. Her own doctor said of her: " She deserved the V.C. for the way she bore pain." " A companion all wit and brightness," said a friend. In truth she ever bore her cross with a smile.

It is impossible to mention half her contributions to *Aunt Judy's Magazine*—a magazine unequalled before or since. Space admits of only a few brief notes of admiration. It was a red-letter Christmas when " Jackanapes " appeared to reveal her art at its zenith. Married to a soldier, deeply interested in the welfare of his men, her feelings are reflected in this story of the glory of self-sacrifice, surely an ideal tract for our troubled times. It is the old, old story of one laying down his life for his friend, retold to the eternal glory of the Empire a thousand times to-day. " An exquisite bit of work, a Meissonier in its way," said an American critic. Yet it is not chiefly by its rare literary quality that it caused Mrs Ewing to " reach the land of matters unforgot ". Let her express her ideals for herself: " There are things—oh, sons of what has deserved to be called *Great* Britain, forget it not—the good of which and the use of which are beyond the calculation of all worldly good. Things such as love and honour and the soul of man do not die with death, and they who would fain live happy ever *after* should not leave those things out of their lives." The Aunt Miss Jessamine might have walked out of *Quality Street*. It was a noble thought to show her, almost too proud to mourn, able to make her sacrifice as freely as Jackanapes himself.

If in *The Peace Egg* the captain's children act the old morality play so well they actually do bring peace and goodwill to half a village, Christmas is plainly the favourite festival of Mrs Ewing. We have the authority of her own sister, who tells us she unconsciously drew her own portrait in *Madame Liberality*, the " little body with a great heart " who lived for others. The frail child going alone to the dentist to have a tooth out when gas was not, to get the shilling reward to buy a present, did what she might have done. She did extract the scanty plums from plain puddings to serve on oyster-shell plates to guests at a dolls' party. Madame Liberality inherits a fortune for one day and is rather scared about using it rightly. Another will is found, and she just sets to work to deck her little house with Christmas holly. E. V. Lucas may well have enshrined her in one of his best anthologies.

Mrs Ewing loved a preacher who " preached the gospel of hope " as she did herself in two Christmas stories written when at New Brunswick where her husband was quartered. In *The*

Three Christmas Trees she paints a pretty picture of the coming of the very first sparkling tree the colony had ever seen. Two of the trees are dreams—one when an imaginative child sees the doll angel on the summit hold out tender arms, the other when the boy was an old man dying in perfect peace, to the sound of the bells ringing for the midnight Eucharist he had shared. Again he saw the radiant vision of long ago as he bade them draw back the curtains. "Light!" he murmured, "the angel—the star!" There was no Christmas tree at all, but over the house-tops the morning star shone pale in the dawn of Christmas Day. *Crackers for Christmas* also came from overseas. The crackers, then a novelty, snapped when a fragrant powder has been flung on the Yule log, have a magical effect on all. The old parson, unhappy about the inadequacy of his Christmas sermon, is wafted away to Palestine to which a visit has been the one event of his quiet life. "It is not England," he muttered. "I have felt nothing like it since I breathed the air of Palestine. . . . The dark blue sky above was lighted by the great multitude of the stars, that noblest vision of the handiwork of God." Suddenly he sees a cavalcade of travellers upon camels. "Then there passed one star of such surpassing brightness that he involuntarily joined in the wild cry of joy and greeting with which the men of the East now prostrated themselves. . . . Wise men indeed, wiser in the highest vision in that you suffered yourselves to be taught of God." . . . "Ah!" the parson almost sobbed, "let me follow! On my knees let me follow into the house and see the Holy Child! In the eyes of how many babies I have seen mind and thought far beyond their powers of communication every mother knows. But if at times with a sort of awe one sees the immortal soul shining through the prison bars of helpless infancy, what, oh what must it be to behold the Godhead veiled in flesh through the face of a little child!" What wonder the old lady told him next day she had "never in thirty years heard him preach such a sermon".

Here is clear evidence of the serene faith of a writer in truth one of the faithful departed, and her own simple hymn may find a cheering echo in our anxious hearts to-day:

> Long, long ago with vows too much forgotten
> The Cross of Christ was sealed on every brow.
> Ah, slow of heart that shun the Christian conflict,
> Rise up at last—the accepted time is now.
> Soldiers of Jesus, blest who endure,
> Stand in the battle—the victory is sure.
> Oh, Christian souls, all base temptation spurning,
> Drown coward thoughts in faith's triumphant hymn.
> Since Jesus suffered, our salvation earning,
> Shall we not toil that we may rest in Him?

ROWLAND GREY.

SURVEY OF BOOKS ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

TEN books have been received for mention in this survey.

1. *Calvinism*, by A. Dakin (Duckworth, 5s.). This is an exceedingly interesting and well written book, summarizing the Reformer's whole teaching with admirable clarity. There is no attempt to gloss over the doctrine of predestination, with which the name of Calvin is popularly connected, but the teaching on that subject is presented fairly, in relation to his complete doctrinal system. In this there are, of course, strange contradictions, but there is also much that is Catholic—so much, in fact, that we should dearly like to submit some quotations from it to our spikier brethren and hear their comments, before we revealed whence the passages were taken. Our own hope of reunion with the Protestant Churches was strengthened by reading this able book.

2. *St Thomas Aquinas on the Eucharist*, by W. B. Monahan (published by the author, St Swithin's Rectory, Worcester, 7s. 6d.). This is a summary from the *Summa*, quite good of its kind, but as the works of St Thomas are easily accessible in other editions, one rather wonders why it was written.

3. *Who? A Book about God*, by Bede Frost (Mowbray, 5s.). For what kind of people is this book intended? The form of the title suggests that it is meant for the unlettered, yet though in oral teaching its author can on occasion most ably impart milk to babes, this book is pulpity in style and abounds in rhetorical questions. Ignoring the simple, superb Hebrew theism of the Bible, it presents God almost entirely in terms of the Thomist-Aristotelian philosophy, as though one must needs be a Thomist in order to be saved. Fr Bede Frost actually speaks in one place of "Aristotle and the Bible", and this really does seem to be for him their order of importance. Apart from this major defect, as it seems to us, there are a number of small mistakes which suggest that the book was written and the proof corrected in haste—"poetic license" mis-spelt on page 57, a quotation about Soames Forsyte on page 26 repeated on page 37, and so on, as well as a good many minor errors in English. There are also some rather hasty statements—for example, on page 49 *f.*, "an aeroplane can do *almost all* that a bird can do". The italics are ours, for the reproduction of the species is a notable activity of birds, and not even Flying Fortresses can do that, no, nor build their own hangars either. Altogether, and albeit regretfully, we get the impression that yet another author has fallen into the snare of the successful and is writing too much. In all fairness, however, we must add that this is the opinion only of one who is not philosophically intelligent. Others under the same roof have enjoyed the book greatly and, if they had had to review it, it would have come off much better. We offer our sympathy to Fr Bede Frost in having struck the wrong reviewer, and hope that he will not only forgive our

candour but will also return it in kind if he ever reads a book of ours.

4. *Conquest of Death : the Christian Interpretation of Immortality*, by F. Townley Lord (S.C.M., 6s.). This is a sound, courageous and balanced presentation of the problem and of the Christian answer to it. There is no shying at fences and no prejudice. It should be very useful.

5. *The Mind of Jesus Christ*, by G. B. Robson (Epworth Press, 5s.). This is a pleasant, fresh, mellow book, simple yet instinct with sound learning and wide reading and the constant spirit of prayer. In regard to the atoning Work of Christ, however, it is somewhat thin. We should like the author to study the work of Dr Vincent Taylor on that subject and then to write another book himself.

6. *Jesus and Our Need*, by L. W. Grensted (S.P.C.K., 1s. 6d.). This is an attempt, sincere but slight, to present Jesus as the answer to the world's need to-day. Its slightness is particularly evident in the treatment of the Transfiguration. That central happening was, we are told, just " a strange experience ", and the theme of the conversation with Moses and Elijah was " not His victory but His ' death ' that He should accomplish at Jerusalem "—" death " being intended apparently as an easier word for " decease ". But, as the author ought to know, St Luke's actual word is *exodus*, which includes the victory with the death. There is also a good deal of lopsided individualism. " It is always the individual who comes first," we are told on page 36, and that is true in a sense, but in this book the individual seems to come last as well as first, and the Christ is considered apart from His mystical Body. Occasionally also there is a regrettable tendency to embroider and sentimentalize the Gospel story: the sentence which describes the death of our Lord is really distressing. And the significance of the Resurrection as the final perfecting of human nature, in which the purpose of creation is at last fulfilled and thereby potentially achieved for all mankind, is as little brought out as is that of the Transfiguration, with which it stands in such close relation. These are substantial faults, but the author loves the Lord of whom he writes, and his book cannot fail to help some people.

7. *The Undivided Mind* (Swarthmore Lecture, 1941), by E. B. Castle (G. Allen and Unwin, paper, 1s. 6d., cloth, 2s.). This is an admirable discussion of present-day problems from the Quaker standpoint, beautifully written and full of essential Catholicism. The writer is a schoolmaster, and all Christian teachers should ponder his educational views and visions.

8. *Let the Bible Help You :* 1,500 *Helpful Scriptural Selections*, compiled by George Perry (G. Allen and Unwin, 3s. 6d.). This is a painstaking, loving piece of work, and may be very useful for the aged and the very sick. But in its very nature it is unsatisfying, for texts out of their contexts are always weakened, and in this case the grouping of the unset jewels is sometimes

rather far-fetched. The collection lacks the robustness which characterizes the patristic use of Scripture, and its perusal leaves one in consequence feeling as though one had eaten an immense amount of bread with hardly any meat.

9. *The Mastery of Evil*, by Roger Lloyd (Centenary Press, 3s. 6d.). This is a book to thank God for; and it is so good and so timely that it is difficult to find words with which to praise it. It goes to the root of the matter, and for all its profundity it is easy to read. It deserves to be studied as well as read, and to be bought as well as borrowed, so that one may lend it to all one's friends who cannot afford it for themselves. We are particularly grateful for the teaching about corporate penitence, and about the cross as the conquest of fatalism as well as of sin. Nothing that has been written during this war gives the gospel message more pointedly for our present need. It ranks with Mr C. S. Lewis's *The Problem of Pain*, which it follows in the Christian Challenge series.

10. *Christian Doctrine : Eight Lectures to Undergraduates in the University of Cambridge*, by J. S. Whale (C.U.P., 7s. 6d.). This is another book to give thanks for and to circulate, to read and read again. It consists of less than two hundred pages, yet it covers all the main themes of Christian theology and, with the single exceptiom of a sentence about our Lord's temptation on page 99, it never fails to present both sides of the paradox in which perfect truth consists. It is brilliantly and worshipfully written, with a selflessness and clarity, a width and sanity that recall the doctrinal writing of St Irenæus or St Athanasius. It is full of epigrams that stick in the mind: " sin always presupposes that which it defaces "; Jesus is " what God means by ' man '. He is what man means by ' God ' "; " the obligation to be intelligent is always a moral problem "; and so on. Two particularly helpful sections must be mentioned. The first is in Lecture IV, where the author makes a profound and beautiful statement of the difference between Hellenism and Hebraism; this, incidentally, we would respectfully commend to Fr Bede Frost. The second is the appendix to Lecture VI, in which he vindicates the Reformers' essential interest in Churchmanship against popular misconception. This is very valuable and important; we hope it will secure the attention it deserves. Anglicans will not be completely satisfied with what Dr Whale says about the Lesser Sacraments; for one thing, he entirely overlooks the essential coherence of Confirmation and Penance with the greater sacrament of baptism. This is, however, only a negative objection, and we feel sure that, if this great Christian ever himself receives the sacrament, let us say of Penance or of Holy Unction, it will be a case of *expertus novit credere*, and a far worthier estimate of the lesser means of grace in his next book. That book, whatever it is, we shall eagerly await.

A Member of C.S.M.V.

Wantage.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE CHURCH AND COLLECTIVISM

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

May I ask of your courtesy some space in which to call attention to a matter that is to-day in some danger of being overlooked. I refer to the seemingly innate tendency of the Christian Church to articulate its thought in terms of the dominant political, social and economic philosophy of the day.

I do this knowing full well that modernists, liberal theologians and historians have made great play with the fact, but at the same time I think it must be confessed that the tendency to which I refer has had in every age a marked effect upon Christian thought, Christian theology and Christian society. To take one example I need only refer to the harm and confusion entailed by the application of juridical and feudal conceptions to the Church and its doctrine. The Church of England in particular bears the very definite marks of certain past periods in its history. Can it be that, when the period through which we are at this time living is passed, the Church will only show the marks of the collectivist impact upon it?

During the nineteenth century Catholicism suffered itself to be mistaken and confused with collectivist notions. A great many people both think and talk of the Church in terms of the collective. Collectivism may bear some resemblance to Catholicism, but that it most certainly is not.

Collectivism as we know and understand it to-day is a product of the nineteenth century. I do not deny that its development along a parallel line to that of the Catholic Revival has greatly helped to reawaken in men the notion of the Church as a corporate and organic whole. Nevertheless, there is a danger arising from failure to distinguish between the Catholic Church *per se* and the result of the impact and influence of the political, social and economic ideas developed externally to and alongside it. I recall the late Dr Figgis uttering a serious warning with regard to such a possibility.

At the present time there is danger that Christian thought and theology will increasingly tend to be construed in collectivist terms. One cannot escape the impression that the recent work *Putting our House in Order* is vitiated by this type of thing. It is that which perhaps more than anything else arouses profound misgiving in the minds of many people. Mr D. G. Peck, in an admirable article recently published in the September number of *Christendom* and entitled "Collectivism and the Catholic Tradition Regarding Property", demonstrates the worst side of collectivism "in the light of Catholic tradition" when he points

to " the sinister way " in which collectivist plans " appeal to the mass man ". " He seeks security rather than responsibility, mechanical provision of work and wages rather than freedom and opportunity to develop his own mind and talents. The poison of the servile state has been at work for a long time in our social life and we must view the possibility of succumbing with the liveliest alarm."

Quoting Mr Belloc, Mr Peck most rightly points out the congruity of collectivism with capitalism and its thorough suitability " in appearance at least " to the capitalist society it proposes to oust.

" It works with the existing machinery of capitalism, it talks and thinks in the existing terms of capitalism, it appeals to just those appetites which capitalism has aroused, and ridicules as fantastic and unheard-of just those things in society the memory of which capitalism has killed among men." Mr Peck endorses as do many of us the opinion of Mr Belloc that collectivism " would work through bureaucracy, with precisely the same weapons of discipline as are employed by capitalism ".

I do not wish to embark upon controversy or presume to judge " certain basic principles and standards " upon which the New Social Order may or may not depend or the reform of the Church itself be envisaged, but at the same time, since it is probably inevitable that Christian thought will tend to an interpretation of the Church along something very like collectivist lines, so that its theology and practice will be an expression of one aspect of the predominant thought of our time, I would emphasize the necessity of being alive to the extreme dangers which the collectivist line of thought suggests. To allow a merely slavish determination of Christian thought by the predominant political, social, economic or even philosophical thought of any given age is to bind the Church in chains and to pile up endless difficulty for the years to come.

Finally, it is a remarkable thing that so many younger theologians and writers, who in matters of theology strongly repudiate every trace of liberalism, are yet in the political, social and economic sphere, if perhaps even unconsciously, deeply imbued with collectivism.

Ivan R. Young.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE RISE OF THE SOCIAL GOSPEL IN AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM, 1865-1915. By Charles Howard Hopkins. Oxford University Press (for Yale University Press). 18s. 6d.

Of recent years the phrase " the Social Gospel ", when regarded as descriptive of a certain development in American religion, has fallen out of favour in European Christian circles. It has been thought to denote a substitution of interest in the conditions of man's earthly life for concern with his eternal destiny, a substitution of the immanent spirit of social progress for the God of the Christian revelation. Europeans are not wholly to be blamed for this; in America itself there has been a tendency to allow the phrase to be, so to speak, " cornered " by thinkers who took this line, as by Professor E. S. Ames and his colleagues of the " Chicago School " in the early twenties of this century. Here in England our " social gospel " had come to us through the tradition of F. D. Maurice, Westcott, Scott Holland, and Gore, men for whom it could never be anything but the expression of a full Christian faith, and we have been apt to contrast the English " expression " with the American " substitution ".

It is therefore a good thing that Dr Hopkins' thorough and careful study has been published in this country as well as in the United States, for it shows how mistaken is this condemnation of the whole movement on account of the aberration of a part of it. The rapid industrialization of the country after the Civil War presented its religious leaders with appalling social and moral conditions. For those who had eyes to see, this provided a challenge to the Church that could not be met by an evangelicalism concerned with individual piety alone; it demanded a moral evaluation of the social and economic organization of the community. At first it was hoped that teaching on the stewardship of wealth might produce the necessary reforms. But the wealthy remained unconverted; the question had to be faced whether the social and economic system of the country was not an embodiment of anti-Christian principles, and the nascent science of sociology found some of its most zealous pioneers in the ranks of Christian seminary professors. They were moved by a growing conviction that it was the will of God to establish on earth a kingdom of righteousness and love, and by reflection on the social implications of the ethical teaching of our Lord.

It was inevitable that the Church in America should feel, as it felt in England, the influence of the nineteenth century interest in evolution and the immanence of God. It was inevitable that there, as here, there should have been those whom this influence carried off their feet and led to put their faith in a Utopian optimism based on the myth of inevitable

progress. But Dr Hopkins shows clearly, and proves by ample evidence, that this was not characteristic of the movement as a whole, that it had leaders comparable to those Anglicans whom I have mentioned, and that it produced statements worthy to be set alongside of the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*, and of the findings of the Malvern Conference. If it be true that greater mutual understanding between the two English-speaking peoples is of importance for the future welfare of the world, this contribution to our better understanding of American Christianity should be widely read by English Christians. It removes any excuse for a form of ignorance which has been too prevalent among us.

LEONARD HODGSON.

OXFORD.

THE RECOVERY OF THE WEST. By Michael Roberts. Faber and Faber. 12s. 6d.

In this important and interesting book Mr Roberts discusses the subject which can now be conveniently summed up, thanks to Spengler, in the phrase " the Decline of the West ". However it be viewed, it is a subject that is difficult enough. There are, however, certain preliminary difficulties of premiss and definition, and these, as was to be expected in a writer of Mr Roberts' experience and discrimination, are faced with clarity and promptitude. Decline can be envisaged as a biological inferiority afflicting either a civilization regarded as an organic whole or an increasing proportion of the individual human components of a civilization. The writer disallows the first conception, the conception of Spengler, and satisfactorily disposes of it. Nor will he allow the second, since it is impossible to make a comprehensive statement about a creature that is not entirely physical in purely physical terms. And since, as he explains, it is impossible to admit that man is both a moral and a physical being, and at the same time to deny the primacy and initiative of his moral over his physical nature without talking nonsense, he proceeds on the assumption that either decadence must mean a decay of spiritual vitality or it can mean nothing. Even so, it is possible to make decadence mean either too much to be convincing or too little to be significant. Spiritual vitality cannot be measured or compared, and even its observance depends upon the spiritual vitality of the observer. Mr Roberts mentions a few of the many who in the past have declared their times to be decadent, only, on the face of it, to be proved wrong by the event. But they were not completely wrong. Their insight, though undisciplined by reason and exaggerated in expression, was real. Its reality cannot be denied unless one is prepared to deny that prophetic gifts are given. If spirit exist, the discerning of spirits must follow as an in-

separable function of it. Few in honesty can refuse to grant that Mr Roberts has made out his case that the 1918-1939 interlude has revealed a loss of confidence and determination, a lack of vitality and enthusiasm, a prevailing frustration and confusion. He considers, and we agree with him, that he is on as firm a piece of ground as the prophet could wish; that if ever decadence meant anything, it meant something in that period. But the firmness of his ground has not made him blind to the continuing necessity of surefootedness. He sees that it is not helpful to speak of decadence save in respect to a ruling class. His contention is that we have lived in a transition, during the fall of one ruling class and the rise of another; that the one lost confidence and a sense of responsibility and that the other had not (and has not) yet acquired those virtues. His analysis of the states of mind involved, and in particular his analysis of the state of mind of that crucial section that has been most conscious of transitional conditions, calling itself progressive, is one of the most brilliant things in a brilliant book and will not endear him to the Left. He also deals, and with perhaps less aptitude, with the philosophies that were supposed to illuminate but have only succeeded in aggravating the perplexity of the modern mind. They all proved incapable of reviving the spirit of man, and of giving people a purpose to live for.

But because there is such a thing as spiritual vitality, it is recoverable and recoverable immediately. Mr Roberts appeals for an admission of its practical necessity and for the adoption of a way of thinking that admits and gives first place to its reality. He urges his readers to reconsider the traditional religious and moral philosophy of the West.

Decline is not inevitable. Man possesses a free will and can dominate circumstances. " Whether Spengler is right depends upon our own free decision." Persuasive as he is, and comprehensive as is the range of his mind, it is difficult not to feel that he just fails to cope decisively with the problem. Decline is not inevitable in a mechanistic sense and the historian admits and even stresses this. But he does, or should, use this concept of decadence advisedly. He does or should use it to describe a situation that is irretrievable. He calls the Roman Empire decadent at the precise point where there was no longer anything that anybody could do to preserve the distinctive qualities that made the Roman Empire itself and not something else. Man is free, but free mainly to accept or reject given alternatives, and free only in a limited sense to create his own. Mr Roberts knows this, and, having sucked the marrow from the Marxist bones, has a keen sense of a historical situation. The trouble may be that his presentation of the existing situation is itself not entirely convincing. The book and its conclusions were conceived before the war, but he does not consider that his conten-

tions are affected by it. The present reviewer, for one, feels that he has underestimated the gravity of its impact and failed to envisage many of its more serious implications. On the other hand, it may be that it is the part of a pragmatic philosopher in the present emergency to emphasize freedom and inculcate faith. In the moral sphere, it is wrong to contemplate possibilities and assess consequences, and politics is part of morals. Certainly a politics that is calculation without faith or courage is dead. But politics divorced from calculation is not politics at all. A fuller discussion of this aspect of the general problem is needed and perhaps we may expect to have it from Mr Roberts on a later occasion. Altogether, he is better at explaining what is involved in this type of problem than at showing the lines along which it might be resolved in terms of practical likelihoods. He is more convincing when he demonstrates how wise is the wisdom of the West than in arguing that the West will, in the first place, recognize that wisdom and, in the second, return to it (a distinction which he recognizes but doesn't make sufficient allowance for). Most readers of THEOLOGY will not wish to question his contention that without a return to the Church there is no hope. They may find his argument, that there is hope of a return to the Church and therefore for civilization because future social and economic conditions will favour it and because the Church's dogma will provide an acceptable background for existing convictions, less convincing. In the first place, such promises are precarious, and, in the second, they are not, in the strictest sense, as Mr Roberts himself would be the first to admit, of practical importance.

BRIAN WORMALD.

CAMBRIDGE.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE MECHANISTS. By W. Osborne Greenwood. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 9s.

What is known as the mechanistic view of the universe interprets it and all its contents, animate and inanimate, in terms of matter and motion, regarding it as a vast and complex machine working automatically. Such a view necessarily excludes mind and consciousness, save as "epiphenomena"—*i.e.*, as appearances and not realities, and powerless as agencies. It may seem surprising that a view so unattractive should have a large vogue, but its strength has always lain in the support apparently given it by the natural sciences, the prestige of which stands so high with the public that anything they are thought to cast doubt upon falls into discredit.

This mechanistic view can be criticized from a metaphysical standpoint; but inasmuch as it is the natural sciences which are thought to support it, it is most usefully attacked from the side

of those sciences, and this is the line of criticism taken by Dr Greenwood. "It is our thesis," he writes, "to see how far science, including biology, justifies man in his religious beliefs, or alternatively requires him to abandon them." His method is to give simple accounts of certain facts of physical and biological science, to stress the wonder of them, and to suggest that their mere fortuity is inconceivable. Examples of such facts are the marvellously complex structure of atoms, and their first stirring into activity from a condition of perfect entropy; the exceptional nature of the carbon atom and its suitability as a basis for life (the same might be said of water); the origin and nature of the "spindle" in the growth and multiplication of organic cells; the marvels of instinct; the growth and structure of the nervous system. The chapter on the last of these subjects is of particular interest, the facts not being commonly known. Though the truth is that what most people lack is not so much a rudimentary knowledge of the facts, since the results of all kinds of scientific research have been so widely popularized, as imagination to perceive the wonder of them.

Dr Greenwood has some interesting things to say of primitive man, who, not so long ago, "was credited with being at unceasing war with everybody and everything else; rapacious, bloodthirsty, and with no notion of what peace meant". The truth, of course, is that this romantic picture is entirely false; it is "civilized" man who is rapacious and bloodthirsty, while primitive tribes are comparatively peaceful and domesticated, not having been educated in cruelty as we have the advantage of being. These primitive "savages" have left behind them drawings of which "the strength of line, accuracy of delineation, and vigorous action portrayed, are all superior to the efforts of most people to-day."

Dr Greenwood's chapter on the Problem of Survival forms an exception to his customary method, since he relies for his argument a good deal on Mr J. W. Dunne's "Serialism". That is to say, his approach is metaphysical rather than strictly scientific. And if it be objected that no scientific facts are available relevant to this sphere, the reply is that the Society for Psychical Research has collected a great quantity during the fifty years of its existence. It may be disputable whether these prove survival, but many of them simply will not fit into the mechanistic scheme, which breaks down if they are accepted, and this is certainly a point worth making. In his chapter on Miracle Dr Greenwood has some interesting facts about parthenogenesis, and remarks on their bearing upon a particular miracle regarded as crucial by many. Arguments of this sort, however, are apt to be double-edged, for an event made more readily credible by being brought within the sphere of the natural loses some of its significance as a unique miracle.

Dr Greenwood has written a very interesting book of theistic apologetics. It is simple and easily read, and it is obviously written by one who has his facts at his fingers' ends.

J. C. Hardwick.

Partington.

As It Happened: an Autobiography. By Maurice B. Reckitt. J. M. Dent and Sons. 12s. 6d.

Mr Maurice Reckitt's *Autobiography* is a difficult book to review. Unless one approaches it with a great effort of sympathy, one is sure to miss its innermost significances. If one would understand, and fully benefit by, it, one must be ready, for example, to assume, at least for the time being and " for the sake of argument ", that jazz music, dancing, croquet, topical revues and amateur acting are all as important as Mr Reckitt is very seriously convinced that they are. One must not be content to dismiss these things as frivolous irrelevances in a book mainly concerned with the more serious and important concerns of life. The whole work hangs closely together. It is the expression of a view of life, and one which has very much to say for itself; though, of course, our author himself would not claim that, by itself, it covers the whole field.

Mr Reckitt is essentially a specialist in leisure. He believes firmly in the coming of the Leisure State. Meanwhile, the circumstances of his life have constituted something very like a vocation to him to explore and elaborate the life of leisure. He is doing much to prepare the ground for the average citizen when (if things turn out as many of us would hope that they may) the Leisure State has superseded the Labour State. To be a man of leisure (when this aspect of life is cultivated with such high seriousness as Mr Reckitt devotes to it) may be a true vocation. The specialist in this line possesses his own very engaging and attractive qualities. Of course, he has also his characteristic defects, but so has every other kind of specialist, including the specialist in religious devotion in the narrower sense.

The man of leisure may, of course, be capable on occasion of getting out of himself much hard work. And Mr Reckitt has certainly done this most signally in some of his more solid books. But these would seem to have been produced as singularly spontaneous by-products of a life lived as a whole on leisurely lines, and governed always by the ideal of leisure. And most of his more " serious " (as some would speak) activities have been obvious " side-lines " of one who is primarily a man of leisure. Thus it has come about that a surprising proportion of his time has been expended in organizing work of various kinds, particularly as a member or the chairman of numerous committees. For the most part he has given this kind of service to divers

propagandist movements; but it is a significant, and peculiarly fascinating, fact that he has attained to dazzling heights in the national organization of the game of croquet.

A life so planned has naturally brought Mr Reckitt into familiar association with many outstanding figures in the life and thought of our day. Practically all of these he appreciates with a lavish generosity. He is indeed by nature something of a hero-worshipper. In most cases he indulges too little in criticism. He has, for instance, next to nothing to say about the glaring limitations of G. K. Chesterton—defects which grew upon him most regrettably after his surrender to Rome. Almost the only person on whom he passes any really serious criticism is Mr G. D. H. Cole; and, while A. R. Orage was a great figure in journalism and a brilliant propagandist, it is rather surprising to find him treated as something not far removed from a major prophet. However, it is always good for us to have before us the best that can be sincerely said of any public figure; and Mr Reckitt's sometimes rather uncritical enthusiasm is at any rate a highly amiable quality.

Our author's dominating interests are politico-sociological. He gives an interesting account of the development of his social thought. He has abandoned many once fondly cherished ideas. But he still retains a strong hope of " a re-created natural order without perversion ". The conception invites very intensive criticism. Suffice it now to say that the hope of it seems to retain a very close kinship to that progressive optimism which he long ago saw through. May he not yet make a further advance, and come to recognize that it is futile to dream of thoroughly " Christianizing " the social order in a radically sin-conditioned world, and confine the Christian task, in this field, to the removal from time to time of a few of the more glaringly anti-Christian abuses ?

His theology is that of a not especially theologically-minded layman. He is content to describe himself roundly as an " Anglo-Catholic " (" Anglican " would appear to bear no other meaning for him). But he evidently does not mean by Anglo-Catholicism the only brand of it which the unexplained term can very well suggest. He insists on a much modified view of " authority ", accepts the higher criticism, and deprecates any rigid dogmatism. He suggests (probably unconsciously), without discussing, such questions as: How can authority *now* be conceived ? When this is fully reinterpreted, how much will be left of Anglo-Catholicism ? And is this system likely to contribute much to any future regeneration of Anglicanism ?

N. E. Egerton Swann.

London.

THE THEOLOGY OF POLITICS. By Nathaniel Micklem. Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d.

This book consists of a collection of essays and is not, as the title may suggest and encourage would-be readers to hope, a systematic treatise. The essays are graceful in style and urbane in temper, but not quite so homogeneous as the preface implies. They contain, it need hardly be said, many true and salutary reflections upon political theory and contemporary affairs. Dr Micklem modestly says: "I have written nothing learned or original or technical. I am a plagiarist, a popularizer." It is not quite clear whose thought he intends to popularize, unless it be that of "Plato and Aristotle and Cicero and St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas," in which case he discovers more consistency than is there. For instance, he rightly points out the importance of the concept of Natural Law in the European tradition and the need for recovering "the ethical basis of our civilization in the West," but he is surely mistaken in suggesting that there is a body of doctrine on this subject which the Fathers took over *both* from the Stoics *and* from Aristotle. This is to ignore the difference between Aristotelian and Stoic teaching and the inconsistencies in the Christian tradition.

"The formal political theory of the Middle Ages is dominated by the contrast between nature and convention; to the Fathers and to the great majority of medieval writers, until St Thomas Aquinas and the recovery of the Aristotelian Politics, all the great institutions of society are conventional and not natural" (Carlyle, *Mediæval Political Theory in the West*, iii. 3; *cp.* v. 4). Dr Micklem does not succeed in popularizing this information; nor does he plagiarize Troeltsch's distinction between the Absolute and the Relative Laws of Nature. The result is that he conveys the impression that the concept of Natural Law is much simpler and less encumbered with difficulties than is in fact the case. This is to be regretted; we agree as to the importance of the concept, and wish to see it studied afresh, but nothing is to be gained by popularizing the notion that there is a consistent and straightforward tradition which will readily supply us with what we want in the way of an ethical basis.

The assertion that there is a Law of Nature ought to be accompanied by as definite as possible a delineation of its content. The deplorable Thomas Hobbes, who said that "the unwritten Law of Nature" had become "of all Laws the most obscure," did at any rate specify and comment upon nineteen distinct propositions which his version of it embraced; and those who now deal with the subject might do well to follow his example to that extent, if in no other way. But perhaps they have good reason for not doing so, since the more specific their definition of principles the more difficult may they find it to maintain that these principles "come down to us from the immemorial

experience of the race and have been most powerfully expressed by those whose names are honoured in the history of mankind " (p. 54), and also that they are agreed on now by " the generality of educated men " (p. 56). It may be that theologians in this country, by whom the subject has been unhappily neglected, will have to undertake a more thorough investigation of the meaning of Natural Law before the idea can be convincingly popularized.

On p. 146 Dr Micklem says: " This book, limited to the field of ' natural theology,' dare not enter upon the supernatural claims of the Church." We are by no means convinced that " the theology of politics " can be satisfactorily regarded in terms of natural theology alone, and Dr Micklem himself in the last few pages of his book expresses misgivings about the limitation, which surely he imposed upon himself, and which was not imposed by the subject. Sooner or later in the field of politics we may have to reckon with, and to advance, the more daring claims; and perhaps the sooner the better. " It is as churchmen," said P. T. Forsyth, " that we define the place of the State; it is not as statesmen that we define the place of the Church."

A. R. Vidler.

Hawarden.

The Dickens World. By H. House. Oxford University Press. 10s. 6d.

" This book," says Mr House in his introduction to *The Dickens World*, " will attempt to show in a broad and simple way the connexion between what Dickens wrote and the times in which he wrote it, between his reformism and some of the things that he wanted reformed, between the attitude to life shown in his books and the society in which he lived." Although he does not discuss the legal and educational aspects of the world in which Dickens lived, these omissions do not mar what is essentially a careful and studious work, which will at once take its place among Dickens literature.

Novels can provide, and have, indeed, provided, most valuable evidence for the social and political history of the period in which the novelist lived. This is as true of Boccaccio in the fourteenth century as of Dos Passos in the twentieth century. Miss E. M. Delafield's series of extracts from the novels of Mrs Sherwood, Elizabeth Wetherall, Charlotte M. Yonge and Dean Farrar, in her *Ladies and Gentlemen in Victorian Fiction*, shows that even seemingly valueless material can be used to good effect to throw light on social custom and convention.

Mr House goes a step farther than this. He points out that evaluation is as important as use, and that without evaluation the history itself is often inaccurate. Hence the attention which he pays to such matters as chronology, which may irritate the

passing reader, but which yet add to the value of the book as a serious study. He emphasizes, for instance, that the influence which Dickens' youth had on his creative ability partly impugns his reputation as a reformer. He also shows how defective the time-sense of some of Dickens' work undoubtedly is. It may be added that his defective historical judgment can be seen from a glance at his *Child's History of England.* Hence, too, the variety and interest of Mr House's many observations, in particular the contrast between the use of the coach in *Pickwick Papers* and the railway train in *Dombey and Son.*

Broadly speaking, Mr House concludes that Dickens was a living expression of the ideas and aspirations of the middle class, ever a "proud Victorian", and that his work was inspired by that spirit of benevolence which Mr House so ably analyses. Benevolence was indeed of the very essence of Dickens' religion. Maurois once said that he was a "Christmas-tree Epictetus," and Chesterton has described his soul as "shot silk of black and crimson, a shot silk of misery and joy". Mr House similarly speaks of his religion as the "religion of Christmas". If Dickens was a prophet—and Mr House is doubtful whether the term can be properly ascribed to him—then he was assuredly a prophet who both condemns and yet reassures, an immediate pessimist and a final optimist, "the Pickwick-Brownlow-Garland-Cheerybyle type." It is for this reason that he can wax extremely eloquent about the abuses which characterized the social history of his own day, an "impatient reformer" who directed his shafts against the Court of Chancery in *Bleak House*, the evils of nursing in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, of education in *Nicholas Nickleby*, the miseries and pains of an early life in *David Copperfield*, and of crimes without number in *Oliver Twist.* Yet at the same time he remains thoroughly Victorian, thoroughly middle class. It was his representative character which made him so popular with his readers. Mr House makes the important point that Dickens omits the more offensive character of the evils with which he was dealing because not to have done so would certainly have lost him his public, and possibly his publishers as well.

Benevolence or Christian humanism was, then, of the essence of Dickens' religion. He was not a scholar nor even a philosopher; his notion of religion was commonplace. "He himself," says Mr House, "shared in the emotional deficiency of the civilization he lived in." He had little or no conception of religious experience, no liking for Puseyite or Roman Catholic, sectarian preacher, the "methodistical" preacher who beguiled Mrs Weller, or Exeter Hall Evangelical. He had no understanding or even appreciation of theology or doctrine, nor even of Christian art (*vide* his criticism of Millais' *Carpenter's Shop*), and he quite evidently believed that the world might be converted by the gentle ethic of a progressive humanism, suffused with the glow of the Christmas tree, the ideal Sunday of the last

part of *Sunday Under Three Heads*. He felt the hardness of religion in the same way as Arthur Clennam himself remembered the dull Sundays of his early years, the hardness of the Murdstones of this world, but he was powerless to provide a fundamental remedy. " He was," as Lord Shaftesbury pointed out, " set, I doubt not, to rouse attention to many evils and many woes," but his religion was, as Mr House shows, " emphatically one of works, not faith ".

Dickens' works will always be read for themselves alone, but Mr House's evaluation of the connexion between nineteenth-century social and political history and Dickens' novels and other works (for Mr House has evidently made good use of *Household Words* and other relevant material) helps the reader to understand the novels rather better, and the good cheer of Dickens' teaching rather more clearly than before. In a sentence, as M. Cazamian has said, Dickens was one of the causes of moral order whereby England was spared a revolution. The book is pleasantly and clearly presented.

V. H. H. Green.

Exeter.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(*Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent comment.*)

Allen and Unwin: A. D. Martin, *A Plain Man's Life of Christ* (8s. 6d.).

Browne and Nolan: E. J. Kissane, *The Book of Isaiah*, Vol. I (21s.).

Central Readers' Board: J. O. F. Murray, *The Origin and Meaning of the Lord's Teaching on Prayer* (6d.).

Church Missions to Jews: J. Jocz, *Is it Nothing to You?* (1s. 6d.).

C.L.A.: L. Coombs, *Calling Catholic Homes* (1s.); *What You are Missing* (2d.); *Advice to Parents and Godparents* (2d.).

Dakers: J. M. Murry, *Cinnamon and Angelica*, A Play (3s. 6d.).

Epworth Press: J. E. Rattenbury, *The Evangelical Doctrine of Charles Wesley's Hymns* (12s. 6d.).

Faber and Faber: G. W. O. Addleshaw, *The High Church Tradition* (7s. 6d.).

Fellowship of Reconciliation: E. Comber, *The Church in the World of Tomorrow* (2d.); A. G. Knott, *The Times of Jesus Christ* (3d.).

Inter-Varsity Fellowship: H. E. Guillebaud, *Some Moral Difficulties of the Bible* (3s. 6d.); B. B. Warfield, *Revelation and Inspiration* (6d.).

Longmans: A. F. Winnington-Ingram, *The Secrets of Fortitude* (2s. 6d.).

National Society and S.P.C.K. (for A.E.G.M.) : J. P. Hodges, *The Holy Spirit and the Kingdom* (2s. 6d.).

Oxford University Press: M. Bodkin, *The Quest for Salvation in an Ancient and a Modern Play* (2s. 6d.).

S.P.C.K.: H. E. Worlledge, *The Significance of the Eucharist and Present Day Practice* (3d.).

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